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OUR OWN TIMES

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A HISTORY

OF

OUR OWN TIMES

FROM THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA
TO THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1880

BY

JUSTIN McCARTHY, M.P.

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II.

A NEW EDITION

WITH AN APPENDIX OF EVENTS TO THE END OF 1886

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1898

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A HISTORY

OF

OUR OWN TIMES.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CAWNPORE.

During the later days of Sir Henry Lawrence's life it had another trouble added to it by the appeals which were made to him from Cawnpore for a help which he could not give. The story of Cawnpore is by far the most profound and tragic in its interest of all the chapters that make up the history of the Indian Mutiny. The city of Cawnpore stands in the Doab, a peninsula between the Ganges and the Jumna, and is built on the south bank of the Ganges, there nearly a quarter of a mile broad in the dry season, and more than a mile across when swelled by the rains. By a treaty made in 1775 the East India Company engaged to maintain a force in Cawnpore for the defence of Oudh, and the revenues of an extensive district of country were appropriated to the maintenance of the troops quartered there. In 1801, for some of the various reasons impelling similar transactions in India, Lord Wellesley 'closed the mortgage,' as Mr. Trevelyan puts it in his interesting and really valuable little book, 'Cawnpore,' and the territory lapsed into the possession of the Company. From that time it took rank as one of our first-class military stations. When Oudh was annexed to our dominions there was an additional reason for maintaining a strong military force at Cawnpore. The city commanded the bridge over which passed the high road to Lucknow, the capital of our new province. The distance from Cawnpore to Lucknow is about fifty miles as the bird flies.

At the time when the mutiny broke out in Meerut there were some three thousand native soldiers in Cawnpore, consisting of two regiments

of infantry, one of cavalry, and a company of artillerymen. There were about three hundred officers and soldiers of English birth. The European or Eurasian population, including women and children, numbered about one thousand. These consisted of the officials, the railway people, some merchants and shopkeepers and their families. The native town had about sixty thousand inhabitants. The garrison was under the command of Sir Hugh Wheeler, among the oldest of an old school of Bengal officers. Sir Hugh Wheeler was some seventy-five years of age at the time when the events occurred which we have now to describe.

The revolt was looked for at Cawnpore from the moment when the news came of the rising at Meerut; and it was not long expected before it came. Sir Hugh Wheeler applied to Sir Henry Lawrence for help; Lawrence of course could not spare a man. Then Sir Hugh Wheeler remembered that he had a neighbour whom he believed to be friendly, despite of very recent warnings from Sir Henry Lawrence and others to the contrary. He called this neighbour to his assistance, and his invitation was promptly answered. The Nana Sahib came with two guns and some three hundred men to lend a helping hand to the English commander.

The Nana Sahib resided at Bithoor, a small town twelve miles up the river from Cawnpore. He represented a grievance. Bajee Rao, Peishwa of Poonah, was the last prince of one of the great Mahratta dynasties. The East India Company believed him guilty of treachery against them, of bad government of his dominions, and so forth; and they found a reason for dethroning him. He was assigned, however, a residence in Bithoor and a large pension. He had no children, and he adopted as his heir Seereek Dhoondoo Punth, the man who will be known to all time by the infamous name of Nana Sahib. It seems almost superfluous to say, that according to Hindoo belief it is needful for a man's eternal welfare that he leave a son behind him to perform duly his funeral rites; and that the adoption of a son is recognised as in every sense conferring on the adopted all the rights that a child of the blood could have. Bajee died in 1851, and Nana Sahib claimed to succeed to all his possessions. Lord Dalhousie had shown in many instances a strangely unwise disregard of the principle of adoption. The claim of the Nana to the pension was disallowed. Nana Sahib sent a confidential agent to London to push his claim there. This man was a clever and handsome young Mahomedan who had at one time been a servant in an Anglo-Indian family, and had picked up a knowledge of French and English. His name was Azimoolah Khan. This emissary visited London in 1854, and became a lion of the fashionable season. As Hajji Baba, the barber's

son, in the once popular story, was taken for a prince in London and treated accordingly, so the promoted footman, Azimoolah Khan, was welcomed as a man of princely rank in our West-End society. He did not succeed in winning over the Government to take any notice of the claims of his master, but being very handsome and of sleek and alluring manners, he became a favourite in the drawing-rooms of the metropolis, and was under the impression that an unlimited number of Englishwomen of rank were dying with love for him. On his way home he visited Constantinople and the Crimea. It was then a dark hour for the fortunes of England in the Crimea, and Azimoolah Khan swallowed with glad and greedy ear all the alarmist rumours that were afloat in Stamboul about the decay of England's strength and the impending domination of Russian power over Europe and Asia. In the Crimea itself Azimoolah had some opportunity of seeing how the campaign was going, and it is not surprising that with his prepossessions and his hopes, he interpreted everything he saw as a threatened disaster for the arms of England. Mr. Russell, the Correspondent of the *Times*, made the acquaintance of Azimoolah Khan in Constantinople and afterwards met him in the Crimea, and has borne testimony to the fact, that along with the young Mahomedan's boasts of his conquests of Englishwomen were mingled a good many grave and sinister predictions as to the prospects of England's empire. The Western visit of this man was not an event without important consequences. He doubtless reported to his master that the strength of England was on the wane; and while stimulating his hatred and revenge, stimulated also his confidence in the chances of an effort to gratify both. Azimoolah Khan did afterwards, as it will be seen, make some grim and genuine havoc among English ladies. The most bloodthirsty massacre of the whole Mutiny is with good reason ascribed to his instigation. With Azimoolah Khan's mission and its results ended the hopes of Nana Sahib for the success of his claims, and began, we may presume, his resolve to be revenged.

Nana Sahib, although his claim on the English Government was not allowed, was still rich. He had the large private property of the man who had adopted him, and he had the residence at Bithoor. He kept up a sort of princely state. He never visited Cawnpore; the reason being, it is believed, that he would not have been received there with princely honours. But he was especially lavish of his attentions to English visitors, and his invitations went far and wide among the military and civil servants of the Crown and the Company. He cultivated the society of English men and women: he showered his civilities upon them. He did not speak or even understand English, but he took a great interest in

English history, customs, and literature. He was luxurious in the most thoroughly Oriental fashion; and Oriental luxury implies a great deal more than any experience of Western luxury would suggest. At the time with which we are now dealing he was only about thirty-six years of age, but he was prematurely heavy and fat, and seemed to be as incapable of active exertion as of unkindly feeling. There can be little doubt that all this time he was a dissembler of more than common Eastern dissimulation. It appears almost certain that while he was lavishing his courtesies and kindnesses upon Englishmen without discrimination, his heart was burning with a hatred to the whole British race. A sense of his wrongs had eaten him up. It is a painful thing to say, but it is necessary to the truth of this history, that his wrongs were genuine. He had been treated with injustice. According to all the recognised usages of his race and his religion, he had a claim indefeasible in justice to the succession which had been unfairly and unwisely denied to him.

It was to Nana Sahib, then, that poor old Sir Hugh Wheeler in the hour of his distress applied for assistance. Most gladly, we can well believe, did the Nana come. He established himself in Cawnpore with his guns and his soldiers. Sir Hugh Wheeler had taken refuge, when the mutiny broke out, in an old military hospital with mud walls, scarcely four feet high, hastily thrown up around it, and a few guns of various calibre placed in position on the so-called entrenchments. Everything seemed to have been against our people in this hour of terror. Sir Hugh Wheeler might have chosen a far better refuge in the magazine, in a different quarter of Cawnpore; but it appeared destined that the mutineers should have this chance, too, as they had every other. The English commander selected his place in the worst position, and hardly capable of defence. Within his almost shadowy and certainly crumbling entrenchments were gathered about a thousand persons, of whom 465 were men of every age and profession. The married women and grown daughters were about 280; the children about the same number. Of the men there were probably 400 who could fight.

It can never be made quite clear whether Nana Sahib had in the beginning any idea of affecting to help the Englishmen. If any object of his could have been served by his assuming such a part for any given length of time, or until any particular moment arrived, he assuredly would not have been wanting in patient dissimulation. But almost as soon as his presence became known in Cawnpore he was surrounded by the mutineers, who insisted that he must make common cause with them and become one of their leaders. He put himself at their disposal. At

first their idea was that he should lead them on to Delhi, the recognised centre of the revolt. But he was urged by some of his advisers, and especially by Azimoolah Khan, not to allow all his personal pretensions to be lost in the cause of Delhi, and his individual influence to be absorbed into the court of the Grand Mogul. He was advised to make himself a great man in the first instance by conquering the country all round Cawnpore; and overcome by these persuasions and by the promptings of personal ambition, he prevailed upon the mutineers not to leave the city until they had first 'scoured these English thence.' The Nana therefore became the recognised chief of the Cawnpore movement. Let us do justice, even to Nana Sahib. It will be hard to say a word for him after this. Let us now observe that he gave notice to Sir Hugh Wheeler that if the entrenchments were not surrendered they would be instantly attacked. They were attacked. A general assault was made upon the miserable mud walls on June 12, but the resistance was heroic and the assault failed. It was after that assault that the garrison succeeded in sending a message to Sir Henry Lawrence, at Lucknow, craving for the aid which it was absolutely impossible for him to give.

From that time the fire of the mutineer army on the English entrenchments never ceased. Cawnpore was alive with all the ruffianism of the region. It became an Alsatia for the scoundrels and jail-birds of the country round, and of the province of Oudh. All these scoundrels took their turn at the pleasant and comparatively safe amusement of keeping up the fire on the English people behind the mud walls. Whenever a regular attack was made the assailants invariably came to grief. The little garrison, thinning in numbers every day and almost every hour, held out with splendid obstinacy, and always sent those who assailed it scampering back—except of course for such assailants as perforce kept their ground by the persuasion of the English bullets. The little population of women and children behind the entrenchments had no roof to shelter them from the fierce Indian sun. They cowered under the scanty shadow of the little walls often at the imminent peril of the unceasing Sepoy bullets. The only water for their drinking was to be had from a single well, at which the guns of the assailants were unceasingly levelled. To go to the well and draw water became the task of self-sacrificing heroes, who might with better chances of safety have led a forlorn hope. The water which the fainting women and children drank might have seemed to be reddened by blood; for only at the price of blood was it ever obtained. It may seem a trivial detail, but it will count for much in a history of the sufferings of delicately-nurtured English women, that from the beginning of the siege of the Cawnpore entrenchments to its tragic end, there was not

as Mr. Trevelyan puts it, 'one spongeful of water' to be had for the purposes of personal cleanliness. The inmates of that ghastly garrison were dying like flies. One does not know which to call the greater; the suffering of the women or the bravery of the men.

The Nana was joined by a large body of the Oudh soldiers, believed to be among the best fighting men that India could produce. These made a grand assault on the entrenchments, and these, too, were driven back by the indomitable garrison, who were hourly diminishing in numbers, in food, in ammunition, in everything but courage and determination to fight. The repulse of the Oudh men made a deep impression on the mutineers. A conviction began to spread abroad that it was of no use attempting to conquer these terrible British sahibs; that as long as one of them was alive he would be as formidable as a wild beast in his lair. The Sepoys became unwilling to come too near to the low crumbling walls of the entrenchment. Those walls might have been leaped over as easily as that of Romulus; but of what avail to know that, when from behind them always came the fatal fire of the Englishmen? It was no longer easy to get the mutineers to attempt anything like an assault. They argued that when the Oudh men could do nothing it was hardly of any use for others to try. The English themselves began to show a perplexing kind of aggressive enterprise, and took to making little sallies in small numbers indeed, but with astonishing effect, on any bodies of Sepoys who happened to be anywhere near. Utterly, overwhelmingly, preposterously outnumbered as the Englishmen were, there were moments when it began to seem almost possible that they might actually keep back their assailants until some English army could come to their assistance and take a terrible vengeance upon Cawnpore. Meanwhile the influence of the Nana began sensibly to wane. They who accept the responsibility of undertakings like his soon come to know that they hold their place only on condition of immediate success. Only great organisations, with roots of system firmly fixed, can afford to wait and to look over disappointment. Nana Sahib began to find that he could not take by assault those wretched entrenchments; and he could not wait to starve the garrison out. He therefore resolved to treat with the English. The terms, it is believed, were arranged by the advice and assistance of Tantia Topee, his lieutenant, and Azimoolah Khan, the favourite of English drawing-rooms. An offer was sent to the entrenchments, the terms of which are worthy of notice. 'All those,' it said, 'who are in no way connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie, and who are willing to lay down their arms, shall receive a safe passage to Allahabad.'

The terms had to be accepted. There was nothing else to be done.

The English people were promised, during the course of the negotiations, sufficient supplies of food and boats to carry them to Allahabad, which was now once more in the possession of England. The relief was unspeakable for the survivors of that weary defence. The women, the children, the wounded, the sick, the dying, welcomed any terms of release. Not the faintest suspicion crossed any mind of the treachery that was awaiting them. How, indeed, could there be any such suspicion? Not for years and years had even Oriental warfare given example of such practice as that which Nana Sahib and the graceful and civilised Azimoolah Khan had now in preparation.

The time for the evacuation of the garrison came. The boats were in readiness on the Ganges. The long procession of men, women, and children passed slowly down; very slowly in some instances, because of the number of sick and wounded by which its progress was encumbered. Some of the chief among the Nana's counsellors took their stand in a little temple on the margin of the river, to superintend the embarkation and the work that was to follow it. Nana Sahib himself was not there. It is understood that he purposely kept away; he preferred to hear of the deed when it was done. His faithful lieutenant, Tantia Topee, had given orders, it seems, that when a trumpet sounded, some work, for which he had arranged, should begin. The wounded and the women were got into the boats in the first instance. The officers and men were scrambling in afterwards. Suddenly the blast of a trumpet was heard. The boats were of the kind common on the rivers of India, covered with roofs of straw, and looking, as some accounts describe them, not unlike floating haystacks. The moment the bugle sounded, the straw of the boat-roofs blazed up, and the native rowers began to make precipitately for the shore. They had set fire to the thatch, and were now escaping from the flames they had purposely lighted up. At the same moment there came from both shores of the river thick showers of grapeshot and musketry. The banks of the Ganges seemed in an instant alive with shot, a very rain of bullets poured in upon the devoted inmates of the boats. To add to the horrors of the moment, if, indeed, it needed any addition, nearly all the boats stuck fast in mudbanks, and the occupants became fixed targets for the fire of their enemies. Only three of the boats floated. Two of these drifted to the Oudh shore, and those on board them were killed at once. The third floated farther along with the stream, reserved for further adventures and horrors. The firing ceased when Tantia Topee and his confederates thought that enough had been done; and the women and children who were still alive were brought ashore and carried in forlorn procession back again through the town where they had suffered

so much, and which they had hoped that they were leaving for ever. They were about 125 in number, women and children. Some of them were wounded. There were a few well-disposed natives who saw them and were sorry for them; who had perhaps served them, and experienced their kindness in other days, and who now had some grateful memory of it, which they dared not express by any open profession of sympathy. Certain of these afterwards described the English ladies as they saw them pass. They were bedraggled and dishevelled, these poor English women: their clothes were in tatters; some of them were wounded, and the blood was trickling from their feet and legs. They were carried to a place called the Savada House, a large building, once a charitable institution bearing the name of Salvador, which had been softened into Savada by Asiatic pronunciation.

On board the one boat which had floated with the stream were more than a hundred persons. The boat was attacked by a constant fire from both banks as it drifted along. At length a party of some twelve men, or thereabouts, landed with the bold object of attacking their assailants and driving them back. In their absence the boat was captured by some of the rebel gangs, and the women and the wounded were brought back to Cawnpore. Some sixty men, twenty-five women, and four children, were thus recaptured. The men were immediately shot. It may be said at once, that of the gallant little party who went ashore to attack the enemy, hand to hand, four finally escaped, after adventures so perilous and so extraordinary that a professional story-teller would hardly venture to make them part of a fictitious narrative.

The Nana had now a considerable number of Englishwomen in his hands. They were removed, after a while, from their first prison-house to a small building north of the canal, and between the native city and the Ganges. Here they were cooped up in the closest manner, except when some of them were taken out in the evening and set to the work of grinding corn for the use of their captors. Cholera and dysentery set in among these unhappy sufferers, and some eighteen women and seven children died. Let it be said for the credit of womanhood, that the royal widows, the relicts of the Nana's father by adoption, made many efforts to protect the captive Englishwomen, and even declared that they would throw themselves and their children from the palace windows if any harm were done to the prisoners. We have only to repeat here, that as a matter of fact no indignities, other than that of the compulsory corn-grinding, were put upon the English ladies. They were doomed, one and all, to suffer death, but they were not, as at one time was believed in England, made to long for death as an escape from shame.

Meanwhile the prospects of the Nana and his rebellion were growing darker and darker. He must have begun to know by this time that he had no chance of establishing himself as a ruler anywhere in India. The English had not been swept out of the country with a rush. The first flood of the mutiny had broken on their defences, and already the tide was falling. The Nana well knew it never would rise again to the same height in his day. The English were coming on. Neill had recaptured Allahabad, and cleared the country all round it of any traces of rebellion. Havelock was now moving forward from Allahabad towards Cawnpore, with six cannon and about a thousand English soldiers. Very small in point of numbers was that force when compared with that which Nana Sahib could even still rally round him; but no one in India now knew better than Nana Sahib what extraordinary odds the English could afford to give with the certainty of winning. Havelock's march was a series of victories, although he was often in such difficulties that the slightest display of real generalship or even soldiership on the part of his opponents might have stopped his advance. He had one encounter with the lieutenant of the Nana, who had under his command nearly four thousand men and twelve guns, and Havelock won a complete victory in about ten minutes. He defeated in the same off-hand way various other chiefs of the mutiny. He was almost at the gates of Cawnpore.

Then it appears to have occurred to the Nana, or to have been suggested to him, that it would be inconvenient to have his English captives recaptured by the enemy, their countrymen. It may be that in the utter failure of all his plans and hopes he was anxious to secure some satisfaction, to satiate his hatred in some way. It was intimated to the prisoners that they were to die. Among them were three or four men. These were called out and shot. Then some Sepoys were sent to the house where the women still were, and ordered to fire volleys through the windows. This they did, but apparently without doing much harm. Some persons are of opinion, from such evidence as can be got, that the men purposely fired high above the level of the floor, to avoid killing any of the women and children. In the evening five men—two Hindoo peasants, two Mahomedan butchers, and one Mahomedan wearing the red uniform of the Nana's body-guard—were sent up to the house, and entered it. Incessant shrieks were heard to come from that fearful house. The Mahomedan soldier came out to the door holding in his hand a sword-hilt from which the blade had been broken off, and he exchanged this now useless instrument for a weapon in proper condition. Not once but twice this performance took place. Evidently the task imposed on these men was hard work for the sword-blades. After a while the five men came out of the

now quiet house and locked the doors behind them. During that time they had killed nearly all the English women and children. They had slaughtered them like beasts in the shambles. In the morning it appeared indeed that the work, however zealously undertaken, had not been quite thorough. The strongest arms and sharpest sabres sometimes fail to accomplish a long piece of work to perfect satisfaction. In the morning it would seem that some of the women, and certainly some of the children, were still alive; that is to say, were not dead. For the five men came then with several attendants to clear out the house of the captives. Their task was to tumble all the bodies into a dry well beyond some trees that grew near. A large crowd of idlers assembled to watch this operation. Then it was seen by some of the spectators that certain of the women and children were not yet quite dead. Of the children some were alive, and even tried to get away. But the same well awaited them all. Some witnesses were of opinion that the Nana's officials took the trouble to kill the still living before they tossed them down into the well; others do not think they stopped for any such work of humanity, but flung them down just as they came to hand, the quick and the dead together. At all events, they were all deposited in the well. Any of the bodies that had clothes worth taking, were carefully stripped before being consigned to this open grave. When Cawnpore was afterwards taken by the English, those who had to look down into that well saw a sight the like of which no man in modern days had ever seen elsewhere. No attempt shall be made to describe it here. When the house of the massacre itself was entered, its floors and its walls told with terrible plainness of the scene they had witnessed. The plaster of the walls was scored and seamed with sword-slashes low down and in the corners, as if the poor women had crouched down in their mortal fright with some wild hope of escaping the blows. The floor was strewn with scraps of dresses, women's faded ragged finery, frilling, underclothing, broken combs, shoes, and tresses of hair. There were some small and neatly severed curls of hair too, which had fallen on the ground, but evidently had never been cut off by the rude weapon of a professional butcher. These doubtless were keepsakes that had been treasured to the last, parted with only when life and all were going. There was no inscription whatever on the walls when the house was first entered. Afterwards a story was told of words found written there by some Englishwomen telling of hideous wrong done to them, and bequeathing to their countrymen the task of revenge. This story created a terrible sensation in England, as was but natural, and aroused a furious thirst for vengeance. It was not true. Some such inscription did appear on the walls afterwards, but it is painful to have to

say that it was a vulgar, and what would have been called in later times a 'sensational' forgery. Our countrywomen died without leaving behind them any record of a desire on their part for vengeance. We may be sure they had other thoughts and other hopes as they died. One or two scraps of paper were found which recorded deaths and such-like interruptions of the monotony of imprisonment; but nothing more. The well of horrors has been filled up, and a memorial chapel surrounded by a garden built upon the spot. It was right to banish all trace of that hideous crime, and to replace the house and the well, as Mr. Trevelyan says, by 'a fair garden and a graceful shrine.'

Something, however, has still to be told of the Nana and his fortunes. He made one last stand against the victorious English in front of Cawnpore, and was completely defeated. He galloped into the city on a bleeding and exhausted horse; he fled thence to Bithoor, his residence. He had just time left, it is said, to order the murder of a separate captive, a woman who had previously been overlooked or purposely left behind. Then he took flight in the direction of the Nepaulese marches; and he soon disappears from history. Nothing of his fate was ever known. Many years afterwards England and India were treated to a momentary sensation by a story of the capture of Nana Sahib. But the man who was arrested proved to be an entirely different person; and indeed from the moment of his arrest few believed him to be the long-lost murderer of the English women. In days more superstitious than our own, popular faith would have found an easy explanation of the mystery which surrounded the close of Nana Sahib's career. He had done, it would have been said, the work of a fiend; and he had disappeared as a fiend would do when his task was accomplished.

CHAPTER XXXV.

RECONQUEST.

The capture of Delhi was effected on September 20. The siege had been long and difficult; and for some time it did not seem to the general in command, Archdale Wilson, that the small force he had could with any hope of success attempt to carry the city by assault. Colonel Baird Smith, who was chief of the engineer department, urged the attempt strongly on him; and at length it was made, and made with success, though not without many moments when failure seemed inevitable.

Brigadier-General Nicholson led the storming columns, and paid for his bravery and success the price of a gallant life. He was shot through the body, and died three days after the English standard had been planted on the roof of the palace of the Moguls. Nicholson was one of the bravest and most capable officers whom the war produced. It is worthy of record as an evidence of the temper aroused even in men from whom better things might have been expected, that Nicholson strongly urged the passing of a law to authorise flaying alive, impalement, or burning of the murderers of the women and children in Delhi. He contended that 'the idea of simply hanging the perpetrators of such atrocities is maddening.' He urged this view again and again, and deliberately argued it on grounds alike of policy and principle. The fact is recorded here not in mere disparagement of a brave soldier, but as an illustration of the manner in which the old elementary passions of man's untamed condition can return upon him in his pride of civilisation and culture, and make him their slave again.

The taking of Delhi was followed by an act over which, from that time to the present, a controversy has been arising at intervals. A young officer, Hodson, of 'Hodson's Horse,' was acting as chief of the Intelligence Department. He had once been in a civil charge in the Punjaub, and had been dismissed for arbitrary and high-handed conduct towards an influential chief of the district. He had been striving hard to distinguish himself, and to regain a path to success, and as the leader of the little force known as Hodson's Horse he had given evidence of remarkable military capacity. He was especially distinguished by an extraordinary blending of cool calculating craft and reckless daring. He knew exactly when to be cautious and when to risk everything on what to other eyes might have seemed a madman's throw. He now offered to General Wilson to capture the King and the Royal Family of Delhi. General Wilson gave him authority to make the attempt, but stipulated that the life of the king should be spared. By the help of native spies Hodson discovered that when Delhi was taken the king and his family had taken refuge in the tomb of the Emperor Hoomayoon, a structure which, with the buildings surrounding and belonging to it, constituted a sort of suburb in itself. Hodson went boldly to this place with a few of his troopers. He found that the Royal Family of Delhi were surrounded there by a vast crowd of armed and to all appearance desperate adherents. This was one of the moments when Hodson's indomitable daring stood him in good stead. He called upon them all to lay down their arms at once; and the very audacity of the order made them suppose he had force at hand

capable of compelling obedience. They threw down their arms, and the king surrendered himself to Hodson. Next day Hodson captured the three royal princes of Delhi. He tried, condemned, and executed them himself, and on the spot. That is to say, he treated them as rebels taken red-handed, and borrowing a carbine from one of his troopers, he shot them dead with his own hand. Their corpses, half-naked, were exposed for some days at one of the gates of Delhi. Hodson did the deed deliberately. Many days before he had a chance of doing it he wrote to a friend to say that if he got into the palace of Delhi, 'the House of Timour will not be worth five minutes' purchase, I ween.' On the day after the deed he wrote: 'In twenty-four hours I disposed of the principal members of the House of Timour the Tartar. I am not cruel; but I confess that I do rejoice in the opportunity of ridding the earth of these ruffians.' Sir J. W. Kaye, who comments on Hodson's deed with a just and manly severity, says: 'I must aver without hesitation that the general feeling in England was one of profound grief not unmingled with detestation. I never heard the act approved; I never heard it even defended.' Sir J. W. Kaye was more fortunate than the writer of this book, who has frequently heard it defended, justified, and glorified; and has a distinct impression that the more general tendency of public opinion in England at the time, was to regard Hodson's act as entirely patriotic and laudable. If in cool blood the deed could now be defended, it might be necessary to point out that there was no evidence whatever of the princes having taken any part in the massacre of Europeans in Delhi; that even if evidence to that effect were forthcoming, Hodson did not wait for or ask for it; and that the share taken by the princes in an effort to restore the dynasty of their ancestor, however it might have justified some sternness of punishment on the part of the English Government, was not a crime of that order which is held in civilised warfare to put the life of its author at the mercy of anyone who captures him when the struggle is all over, and the reign of law is safe. One cannot read the history of this Indian Mutiny without coming to the conclusion that in the minds of many Englishmen a temporary prostration of the moral sense took place, under the influence of which they came to regard the measure of the enemy's guilt as the standard for their right of retaliation, and to hold that if he had no conscience they were thereby released from the necessity of having any. As Mr. Disraeli put it, they were making Nana Sahib the model for the British officer to imitate. Hodson was killed not long after; we might well wish to be free to allow him to rest without censure in his untimely grave. He was a brave and clever soldier, but one who unfortunately

allowed a fierce temper to 'overcrow,' as the Elizabethan writers would have put it, the better instincts of his nature, and the guidance of a cool judgment.

General Havelock made his way to the relief of Lucknow. Sir James Outram, who had returned from Persia, had been sent to Oudh with full instructions to act as Chief Commissioner. He had complete civil and military authority. Appearing on the scene armed with such powers, he would in the natural order of things have superseded Havelock, who had been fighting his way so brilliantly, in the face of a thousand dangers, to the relief of the beleaguered English in Lucknow. But Outram was not the man to rob a brave and successful comrade of the fruits of his toil and peril. Outram wrote to Havelock:—'To you shall be left the glory of relieving Lucknow, for which you have already struggled so much. I shall accompany you only in my civil capacity as Commissioner, placing my military service at your disposal should you please, and serving under you as a volunteer.' Havelock was enabled to continue his victorious march. He fought battle after battle against forces far superior in numbers to his own, and on September 25 he was able to relieve the besieged English at Lucknow. His coming, it can hardly be doubted, saved the women and children from such a massacre as that of Cawnpore; but Havelock had not the force that might have driven the rebels out of the field. His little army, although it had been reinforced by the coming of Sir James Outram, was yet entirely inadequate to the task which circumstances had imposed on it. The enemy soon recovered from any momentary panic into which they had been thrown by Havelock's coming, and renewed the siege; and if England had not been prepared to make greater efforts for the rescue of her imperilled people, it is but too probable that the troops whom Havelock brought to the relief of Lucknow would only have swelled the number of the victims. But in the meantime the stout soldier, Sir Colin Campbell, whom we have already heard of in the Crimean campaign, had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Indian forces, and had arrived in India. He received, it was said, the announcement of the task assigned to him one afternoon in London, and before the evening he was on his way to the scene of his command. He arrived in Cawnpore on November 3, and he set out for Lucknow on the 9th. He had, however, to wait for reinforcements, and it was not until the 14th that he was able to attack. Even then he had under his command only some 5,000 men, a force miserably inferior in number to that of the enemy; but in those days an English officer thought himself in good condition to attack if the foe did not outnumber him by more than four or five to one. A series of actions was fought by Sir Colin Campbell and his little force,

attacking the enemy on the one side, who were attacked at the same time by the besieged garrison of the residency. On the morning of November 17, Outram and Havelock, with their staff officers, were able to join Campbell before the general action was over, and by the combined efforts of both forces the enemy was dislodged. Sir Colin Campbell resolved, however, that the residency must be evacuated; and accordingly on the 19th heavy batteries were opened against the enemy's position, as if for the purpose of assault, and under cover of this operation the women, the sick, and the wounded were quietly removed to the Dilkoosha, a small palace in a park about five miles from the residency, which had been captured by Sir Colin Campbell on his way to attack the city. During some days following the garrison was quietly withdrawing to the Dilkoosha. By midnight of the 22nd, the whole garrison, without the loss of a single man, had left the residency. Two or three days more saw the troops established at Alumbagh, some four miles from the residency, in another direction from that of the Dilkoosha. Alumbagh is an isolated cluster of buildings, with grounds and enclosure to the south of Lucknow. The name of this place is memorable for ever in the history of the war. It was there that Havelock closed his glorious career. He was attacked with dysentery, and his frame, exhausted by the almost superhuman strain which he had put upon it during his long days and sleepless nights of battle and victory, could not long resist such an enemy. On November 24 Havelock died. The Queen created him a baronet, or rather affixed that honour to his name on the 27th of the same month, not knowing then that the soldier's time for struggle and for honour was over. The title was transferred to his son, the present Sir Henry Havelock, who had fought gallantly under his father's eyes. The fame of Havelock's exploits reached England only a little in advance of the news of his death. So many brilliant deeds had seldom in the history of our wars been crowded into days so few. All the fame of that glorious career was the work of some strenuous splendid weeks. Havelock's promotion had been slow. He had not much for which to thank the favour of his superiors. No family influence, no powerful patrons or friends had made his slow progress more easy. He was more than sixty when the mutiny broke out. He was born in April 1795; he was educated at the Charterhouse, London, where his grave, studious ways procured for him the nickname of 'old phlos'—the schoolboy's 'short' for 'old philosopher.' He went out to India in 1823, and served in the Burmese war of 1824, and the Sikh war of 1845. He was a man of grave and earnest character, a Baptist by religion, and strongly penetrated with a conviction that the religious spirit ought to pervade and inform all the duties of military as

well as civil life. By his earnestness and his example he succeeded in animating those whom he led with similar feelings; and 'Havelock's saints' were well-known through India by this distinctive appropriate title. 'Havelock's saints' showed, whenever they had an opportunity, that they could fight as desperately as the most reckless sinners; and their commander found the fame flung in his way, across the path of his duty, which he never would have swerved one inch from that path to seek. Amid all the excitement of hope and fear, passion and panic, in England, there was time for the whole heart of the nation to feel pride in Havelock's career and sorrow for his untimely death. Untimely? Was it after all untimely? Since when has it not been held the crown of a great career that the hero dies at the moment of accomplished victory?

Sir Colin Campbell left General Outram in charge of Alumbagh for the purpose of keeping watch upon the movements of the insurgents who were still strong in the city of Lucknow. Sir Colin himself advanced towards Cawnpore, where he soon found that there was some serious work to be done. A large hostile force, composed chiefly of the revolted army of Scindiah, the ruler of Gwalior, had been marching upon Cawnpore; and General Windham, who held the command there, had gone out to attack them. It fared with him, however, very much as it had done with Sir Henry Lawrence near Lucknow; he found the enemy far too strong for him; he was compelled to retreat, not without severe loss, to his entrenchments at Cawnpore, and the enemy occupied the city itself. Sir Colin Campbell attacked the rebels at one place; Sir Hope Grant attacked them at another, and Cawnpore was retaken. Sir Colin Campbell then turned his attention to the very important work of reconquering the entire city of Lucknow and dispersing the great body of rebels who were concentrated there. It was not until March 19, 1858, that Lucknow fell completely into the hands of the English. Our operations had been almost entirely by artillery, and had been conducted with consummate prudence as well as boldness, and our loss was therefore very small, while the enemy suffered most severely. About 2,000 of the rebels were killed in the final attack, and more than 100 of their guns were taken. Among our wounded were the gallant leader of the naval brigade, Sir William Peel, son of the great statesman; and among the killed was 'Hodson, of Hodson's Horse,' the executioner of the princes of Delhi. Sir William Peel died at Cawnpore shortly after, of small-pox, his death remarked and lamented even amid all the noble deaths of that eventful time. One name must not be forgotten among those who endured the siege of Lucknow. It is that of Dr. Brydon, whom we last saw as he appeared under the walls of Jellalabad, the one survivor come back to tell the tale of the

disastrous retreat from Cabul. A gifted artist, Mrs. Butler, has lately painted that picture as no words could paint it. Dr. Brydon served through the Lucknow defence, and was specially named in the despatch of the Governor-General. 'After passing through the Cabul campaign of 1841-42,' the Governor-General says of Dr. Brydon, 'he was included in the illustrious garrison who maintained the position in Jellalabad. He may now, as one of the heroes of Lucknow, claim to have witnessed and taken part in an achievement even more conspicuous, as an example of the invincible energy and enduring courage of British soldiers.'

Practically, the reconquest of Lucknow was the final blow in the suppression of the great Bengal mutiny. The two centres of the movement were Delhi and Lucknow; and when these strongholds were once more in the hands of the English, rebellion in the land had well-nigh lost its sway. There was hardly, after that time, any rebel camp left to which it would have been worth carrying a flag of truce. Some episodes of the war, however, were still worthy of notice. For example, the rebels seized Gwalior, the capital of the Maharajah Scindia, who escaped to Agra. The English had to attack the rebels, retake Gwalior, and restore Scindia. One of those who fought to the last on the rebels' side was the Ranee, or Princess of Jhansi, whose territory, as we have already seen, had been one of our annexations. She had flung all her energies into the rebellion, regarding it clearly as a rebellion, and not as a mere mutiny. She took the field with Nana Sahib and Tantia Topee. For months after the fall of Delhi she contrived to baffle Sir Hugh Rose and the English. She led squadrons in the field. She fought with her own hand. She was engaged against us in the battle for the possession of Gwalior. In the uniform of a cavalry officer she led charge after charge, and she was killed among those who resisted to the last. Her body was found upon the field, scarred with wounds enough in the front to have done credit to any hero. Sir Hugh Rose paid her the well-deserved tribute which a generous conqueror is always glad to be able to offer. He said, in his general order, that 'the best man upon the side of the enemy was the woman found dead, the Ranee of Jhansi.'

The Maharajah Scindia of Gwalior had deserved well of the English Government. Under every temptation, every threat, and many profound perils from the rebellion, he had remained firm to his friendship. So, too, had Holkar, the Maharajah of the Indore territory. Both these princes were young when the mutiny broke out; some twenty-three years old, each of them; at a time of life, therefore, when ambition and enterprise might have been expected to tempt with fullest fascination. Holkar was actually believed, in the beginning, to have favoured the rebellion; he

was deliberately accused of having taken part with it; there are, even still, those who would argue that he was its accomplice; so closely were his fortunes, to all appearance, bound up with the cause of the mutineers, and so natural did it seem that he should fail to hold out against them. But he disappointed all such expectations on the part of our enemies, and proved himself a faithful friend of England. The country owes much to those two princes, for the part they took in her hour of need; and she has not, we are glad to think, proved herself ungrateful.

The administration of Patna by Mr. William Tayler supplied an episode which is still discussed with something like partisan keenness. Patna is the Mahomedan capital of the region east of Benares, and the city was the head-quarters of the chiefs of the fanatical, warlike Wahabis. Mr. Tayler was the Commissioner of the district; he suspected that rebellion was being planned there, and he got the supposed religious leaders of it into his power by a stratagem something like that which the Duke of Alva employed to make Egmont his prisoner. Did the end justify the means? is the question still asked. Was there a rebellious plot; and if so, was it right to anticipate Oriental treachery by a stroke of more than Oriental craft? The episode was interesting; but it is too purely an episode to be discussed at any length in these pages.

It is not necessary to describe, with any minuteness of detail, the final spasms of the rebellion. Tantia Topee, the lieutenant of Nana Sahib, held out obstinately in the field for a long time, and after several defeats. He was at length completely hemmed in by the English, and was deserted by the remainder of his army. He was taken prisoner in April 1859, was tried for his share in the Cawnpore massacre, and was hanged like any vulgar criminal. The old King of Delhi was also put on trial, and being found guilty, was sentenced to transportation. He was sent to the Cape of Good Hope, but the colonists there refused to receive him, and this last of the line of the Grand Moguls had to go begging for a prison. He was finally carried to Rangoon, in British Burmah. On December 20, 1858, Lord Clyde, who had been Sir Colin Campbell, announced to the Governor-General that 'the campaign is at an end, there being no longer even the vestige of rebellion in the province of Oudh;' and that 'the last remnant of the mutineers and insurgents have been hopelessly driven across the mountains which form the barrier between the kingdom of Nepaul and Her Majesty's empire of Hindostan.' On May 1, 1859, there was a public thanksgiving in England for the pacification of India.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE END OF 'JOHN COMPANY.'

WHILE these things were passing in India, it is needless to say that the public opinion of England was distracted by agitation and by opposing counsels. For a long time the condition of Indian affairs had been regarded in England with something like absolute indifference. India was, to the ordinary Englishman, a place where men used at one time to make large fortunes within a few years ; and where lately military and civil officers had to do hard work enough without much chance of becoming nabobs. In many circles it was thought of only as the hated country where one's daughter went with her husband, and from which she had, after a few years, to send back her children to England, because the climate of India was fatal to certain years of childhood. It was associated, in the minds of some, with tiger-hunting ; in the minds of others with Bishop Heber and missions to the heathen. Most persons had a vague knowledge that there had been an impeachment of Warren Hastings for something done by him in India, and that Burke had made great speeches about it. In his famous essay on Lord Clive, published only seventeen years before the Indian Mutiny, Lord Macaulay complained, that while every schoolboy, as he put it in his favourite way, knew all about the Spanish conquests in the Americas, about Montezuma, and Cortes, and Pizarro, very few even of cultivated English gentlemen knew anything whatever about the history of England's empire in India. In the House of Commons a debate on any question connected with India was as strictly an affair of experts as a discussion on some local gas or water bill. The House in general did not even affect to have any interest in it. The officials who had to do with Indian affairs ; the men on the Opposition benches, who had held the same offices while their party was in power ; these, and two or three men who had been in India, and were set down as crotchety because they professed any concern in its mode of government —such were the politicians who carried on an Indian debate, and who had the House all to themselves while the discussion lasted. The Indian Mutiny startled the public feeling of England out of this state of unhealthy languor. First came the passion and panic, the cry for blood, the wholesale executions, the blowing of rebels from guns ; then came a certain degree of reaction, and some eminent Englishmen were found to

express alarm at the very sanguinary methods of repression and of punishment that were in favour among most of our fellow-countrymen in India.

It was during this season of reaction that the famous discussions took place on Lord Canning's proclamation. On March 3, 1858, Lord Canning issued his memorable proclamation; memorable, however, rather for the stir it created in England than for any great effect it produced in India. It was issued from Allahabad, whither the Governor-General had gone to be nearer to the seat of war. The proclamation was addressed to the Chiefs of Oudh, and it announced that, with the exception of the lands then held by six loyal proprietors of the province, the proprietary right in the whole of the soil of Oudh was transferred to the British Government, which would dispose of it in such manner as might seem fitting. The disposal, however, was indicated by the terms of the proclamation. To all chiefs and landholders who should at once surrender to the Chief Commissioner of Oudh it was promised that their lives should be spared, 'provided that their hands are unstained by English blood murderously shed;' but it was stated, that 'as regards any further indulgence which may be extended to them, and the conditions in which they may hereafter be placed, they must throw themselves upon the justice and mercy of the British Government.' Read by the light of literalness, this proclamation unquestionably seemed to amount to an absolute confiscation of the whole soil of Oudh; for even the favoured landowners who were to retain their properties were given to understand that they retained them by the favour of the Crown and as a reward for their loyalty. This was the view taken of the Governor-General's act by one whose opinion was surely entitled to the highest consideration from every one, Sir James Outram, Chief Commissioner of Oudh. Sir James Outram wrote at once to Lord Canning, pointing out that there were not a dozen landholders in Oudh who had not either themselves borne arms against us or assisted the rebels with men or money, and that therefore the effect of the proclamation would be to confiscate the entire proprietary right in the province and to make the chiefs and landlords desperate, and that the result would be a 'guerilla war for the extirpation, root and branch, of this class of men, which will involve the loss of thousands of Europeans by battle, disease, and exposure.' Lord Canning was not ready to admit, even in deference to such authority as that of Sir James Outram, that his policy would have any such effects. But he consented to insert in the proclamation a clause announcing that a liberal indulgence would be granted to those who should promptly come forward to aid in the restoration of order, and that 'the Governor-General will be ready to view liberally the claims which they may thus acquire to a restitution of their former rights.'

In truth, it was never the intention of Lord Canning to put in force any cruel and sweeping policy of confiscation. The whole tenor of his rule in India, the very reproaches that had been showered on him, the very nickname which his enemies had given him—that term of reproach that afterwards came to be a title of honour—might have suggested to the sharpest critic that it was not likely 'Clemency Canning' was about to initiate a principle of merciless punishment for an entire class of men. Lord Canning had come to the conclusion that the English Government must start afresh in their dealings with Oudh. He felt that it would be impossible to deal with the chiefs and people of the province so lately annexed as if we were dealing with revolted Sepoys. He put aside any idea of imprisonment or transportation for mere rebellion, seeing that only in the conqueror's narrowest sense could men be accounted rebels because they had taken arms against a power which but a moment before had no claim whatever to their allegiance or their obedience. Nevertheless, Oudh was now a province of the British Empire in Hindostan, and Lord Canning had only to consider what was to be done with it. He came to the conclusion that the necessary policy for all parties concerned was to make of the mutiny and the consequent reorganisation, an opportunity not for a wholesale confiscation of the land but for a measure which should declare that the land was held under the power and right of the English Government. The principle of his policy was somewhat like that adopted by Lord Durham in Canada. It put aside the technical authority of law for the moment in order that a reign of genuine law might be inaugurated. It seized the power of a dictator over life and property, that the dictator might be able to restore peace and order at the least cost in loss and suffering to the province and the population whose affairs it was his task to administer.

But it may be freely admitted that on the face of it the proclamation of Lord Canning looked strangely despotic. Some of the most independent and liberal Englishmen took this view of it. Men who had supported Lord Canning through all the hours of clamour against him, felt compelled to express disapproval of what they understood to be his new policy. It so happened that Lord Ellenborough was then President of the Board of Control, and Lord Ellenborough was a man who always acted on impulse, and had a passion for fine phrases. He had a sincere love of justice, according to his lights; but he had a still stronger love for antithesis. Lord Ellenborough therefore had no sooner received a copy of Lord Canning's proclamation, than he despatched upon his own responsibility a rattling condemnation of the whole proceeding. 'Other conquerors,' wrote the fiery and eloquent statesman, 'when they have succeeded in overcoming resistance have excepted a few persons as still deserving of

punishment, but have with a generous policy extended their clemency to the great body of the people. You have acted upon a different principle, you have reserved a few as deserving of special favour, and you have struck, with what they feel as the severest of punishments, the mass of the inhabitants of the country. We cannot but think that the precedents from which you have departed will appear to have been conceived in a spirit of wisdom superior to that which appears in the precedent you have made.' The style of this despatch was absolutely indefensible. A French Imperial prefect with a turn for eloquent letter-writing might fitly thus have admonished the erring *maire* of a village community; but it was absurd language for a man like Lord Ellenborough to address to a statesman like Lord Canning, who had just succeeded in keeping the fabric of English government in India together during the most terrible trial ever imposed on it by fate. The question was taken up immediately in both Houses of Parliament. Lord Shaftesbury in the House of Lords moved a resolution declaring that the House regarded with regret and serious apprehension the sending of such a despatch 'through the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors'—an almost obsolete piece of machinery, we may remark—and its publication; and that such a course must prejudice our rule in India by weakening the authority of the Governor-General and encouraging the resistance of rebels still in arms. A similar motion was introduced by Mr. Cardwell in the House of Commons. In both Houses the arraignment of the Ministry proved a failure. Lord Ellenborough at once took upon himself the whole responsibility of an act which was undoubtedly all his own; and he resigned his office. The resolution was therefore defeated in the House of Lords on a division, and had to be withdrawn in a rather ignominious manner in the House of Commons. Four nights of vehement debate were spent in the latter House. Opinion was strangely divided. Men like Mr. Bright and Sir James Graham condemned the proclamation and defended the action of the Government. The position of Mr. Cardwell and his supporters became particularly awkward, for they seemed after the resignation of Lord Ellenborough to be only trying to find partisan advantage in a further pressure upon the Government. The news that Sir James Outram had disapproved of the proclamation came while the debate was still going on, and added new strength to the cause of the Government. It came out in the course of the discussion that Lord Canning had addressed a private letter to Mr. Vernon Smith, afterwards Lord Lyveden, Lord Ellenborough's predecessor as President of the Board of Control, informing him that the proclamation about to be issued would require some further explanation which the pressure of work did not allow its author just then to give. Lord Canning wrote this under the belief

that Mr. Vernon Smith was still at the head of the Board of Control. Mr. Vernon Smith did not tell Lord Ellenborough anything about this letter; and it was of course very strongly urged that, had Lord Ellenborough known of such a document being in existence, he would have held his hand and waited for the further explanation. Mr. Vernon Smith, it was explained, was in Ireland when the letter arrived, and did not get it in time to prevent the action of Lord Ellenborough; and Lord Granville stated that he had himself had a letter to a similar effect from Lord Canning of which he told Lord Ellenborough, but that that impetuous nobleman did not show the least interest in it, and did not even hear it out to the end. Still there was an obvious difference between a letter to a friend and what might be considered an official communication to Lord Ellenborough's predecessor in the very office on behalf of which he issued his censure; and at all events the unexpected revelation tended greatly to strengthen the position of the Government. The attack made by Mr. Cardwell broke down or crumbled away. Mr. Disraeli described the process of its disappearance in a speech which he delivered a few days after at Slough, and the description is one of his happiest pieces of audacious eloquence. 'It was like a convulsion of nature rather than any ordinary transaction of human life. I can only liken it to one of those earthquakes which take place in Calabria or Peru. There was a rumbling murmur, a groan, a shriek, a sound of distant thunder. No one knew whether it came from the top or the bottom of the house. There was a rent, a fissure in the ground, and then a village disappeared; then a tall tower toppled down; and the whole of the opposition benches became one great dissolving view of anarchy.' Assuredly Mr. Disraeli was entitled to crow over his baffled antagonists. 'Do you triumph, Roman, do you triumph?' It must have been a meeker Roman than Mr. Disraeli, who would not have triumphed over so complete and unexpected a humiliation of his enemies. The debate in the House of Commons was memorable in other ways, as well as for its direct political consequences. It first gave occasion for Mr. Cairns, as he then was, to display the extraordinary capacity as a debater which he possessed, and which he afterwards made of such solid and brilliant service to his party. It was also the occasion of the Count de Montalembert's celebrated pamphlet '*Un débat sur l'Inde au Parlement Anglais*,' for which, and its thrilling contrast between the political freedom of England and the imperial servitude of France, he had the honour of being prosecuted by the French Government, and defended by M. Berryer.

Lord Canning continued his policy, the policy which he had marked out for himself, with signal success. The actual proclamation had little

or no effect, as punishment, on the landholders of Oude. It was never intended by Lord Canning that it should have any such. In fact, within a few weeks after the capture of Lucknow, almost all the large landowners had tendered their allegiance. Lord Canning impressed upon his officers the duty of making their rule as considerate and conciliatory as possible, The new system established in Oudh was based upon the principle of recognising the Talookdars as responsible landholders, while so limiting their power by the authority of the Government as to get rid of old abuses, and protect the occupiers and cultivators of the soil. The rebellion had abundantly proved that the village communities were too feeble and broken to hold the position which had been given with success to similar communities in the Punjaub. It should be remembered in considering Lord Canning's policy that a proprietary right, by whatever name it may be distinguished or disguised, has always been claimed by the Government of India. It is only parted with under leases or settlements that are liable to be revised and altered. The settlements which Lord Canning effected in India easily survived the attacks made upon their author. They would have been short-lived, indeed, if they had not long survived himself as well. Canning, like Durham, only lived long enough to hear the general acknowledgment that he had done well for the country he was sent to govern, and for the country in whose name and with whose authority he went forth.

The rebellion pulled down with it a famous old institution, the government of the East India Company. Before the mutiny had been entirely crushed, the rule of 'John Company' came to an end. The administration of India had, indeed, long ceased to be under the control of the Company as it was in the days of Warren Hastings. A Board of Directors, nominated partly by the Crown, and partly by the Company, sat in Leadenhall Street, and gave general directions for the government of India. But the parliamentary department, called the Board of Control, had the right of reviewing and revising the decisions of the Company. The Crown had the power of nominating the Governor-General, and the Company had only the power of recalling him. This odd and perhaps unparalleled system of double government had not much to defend it on strictly logical grounds; and the moment a great crisis came it was natural that all the blame of difficulty and disaster should be laid upon its head. With the beginning of the mutiny the impression began to grow up in the public mind here that something of a sweeping nature must be done for the reorganisation of India; and before long this vague impression crystallised into a conviction that England must take Indian administration into her own hands, and that the time had come for the fiction of rule by a trading company

to be absolutely given up. Indeed, Lord Ellenborough had recommended in his evidence before a Select Committee of the Commons on Indian affairs as far back as 1852, that the government of India should be transferred from the Company to the Crown. As we have already seen, the famous system of government which was established by Pitt was really the government of the Crown; at least, Pitt made the administration of India completely subject to the English Government. The difference between Pitt's measure and that introduced by Fox was, that Pitt preserved the independence of the Company in matters of patronage and commerce, whereas Fox would have placed the whole commerce and commercial administration of the Company under the control of a body nominated by the Crown. By the Act of 1853 the patronage of the Civil Service was taken from the Company, and yet was not given to the Crown. It was in fact a competitive system. Scientific and civil appointments were made to depend on capacity and fitness alone. Macaulay spoke for the last time in the House of Commons in support of the principle of admission by competitive examination to the Civil Service of India. In the beginning of 1858 Lord Palmerston introduced a bill to transfer the authority of the Company formally and absolutely to the Crown. The plan of the scheme was that there were to be a president and a council of eight members, to be nominated by the Government. There was a large majority in the House of Commons in favour of the bill; but the agitation caused by the attempt to assassinate the Emperor of the French, and Palmerston's ill-judged and ill-timed Conspiracy Bill, led to the sudden overthrow of his Government. When Lord Derby succeeded to power, he brought in a bill for the better government of India at once: but the measure was a failure. It was of preposterous construction. It bore upon its face curious evidence of the fantastic ingenuity of Lord Ellenborough. It created a Secretary of State for India, with a council of eighteen. Nine of these were to be nominees of the Crown; nine were to be concessions to the principle of popular election. Four of the elected must have served her Majesty in India for at least ten years, or have been engaged in trade in that country for fifteen years; and they were to be elected by the votes of anyone in this country who had served the Queen or the Government of India for ten years; or any proprietor of capital stock in Indian railways or other public works in India to the amount of two thousand pounds; or any proprietor of India stock to the amount of one thousand pounds. The other five members of the council must as their qualification have been engaged in commerce in India, or in the exportation of manufactured goods to that country, for five years, or must have resided there for ten years. These five were to be elected by the parliamentary constituencies

of London, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Belfast. This clause was Lord Ellenborough's device. Anything more absurdly out of tune with the whole principle of popular election than this latter part of the scheme it would be difficult to imagine. The theory of popular election is simply that every man knows best what manner of representative is best qualified to look after his interests in the Legislative Assembly. But by no distortion of that principle can it be made to assert the doctrine that the parliamentary electors of London and Liverpool are properly qualified to decide as to the class of representatives who could best take care of the interests of Bengal, Bombay, and the Punjaub. Again, as if it were not absurd enough to put elections to the governing body of India into the hands of such constituencies, the field of choice was so limited for them as to render it almost impossible that they could elect really suitable men. It was well pointed out at the time that by the ingenious device of the Government a constituency might send to the Indian Council any man who had exported beer in a small way to India for five years, but could not send Mr. John Stuart Mill there. The measure fell dead. It had absolutely no support in the House or the country. It had only to be described in order to ensure its condemnation. It was withdrawn before it had gone to a second reading. Then Lord John Russell came to the help of the puzzled Government, who evidently thought they had been making a generous concession to the principle of popular election and were amazed to find their advances so coldly and contemptuously received. Lord John Russell proposed that the House should proceed by way of resolutions—that is that the lines of a measure should be laid down by a series of resolutions in committee of the whole House; and that upon those lines the Government should construct a measure. The suggestion was eagerly welcomed, and after many nights of discussion a basis of legislation was at last agreed upon. This bill passed into law in the autumn of 1858; and for the remainder of Lord Derby's tenure of power, his son, Lord Stanley, was Secretary of State for India. The bill, which was called 'An Act for the better Government of India,' provided that all the territories previously under the government of the East India Company, were to be vested in her Majesty, and all the Company's powers to be exercised in her name. One of her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State was to have all the power previously exercised by the Company, or by the Board of Control. The Secretary was to be assisted by a Council of India, to consist of fifteen members, of whom seven were to be elected by the Court of Directors from their own body, and eight nominated by the Crown. The vacancies among the nominated were to be filled up by the Crown; those among the elected by the remaining members of the Council for a certain time, but

afterwards by the Secretary of State for India. The competitive principle for the Civil Service was extended in its application and made thoroughly practical. The military and naval forces of the Company were to be deemed the forces of her Majesty. A clause was introduced declaring that, except for the purpose of preventing or repelling actual invasion of India, the Indian revenues should not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of her Majesty's Indian possessions. Another clause enacted that whenever an order was sent to India directing the commencement of hostilities by her Majesty's forces there, the fact should be communicated to Parliament within three months, if Parliament were then sitting, or if not, within one month after its next meeting. These clauses were heard of more than once in later days. The Viceroy and Governor-General was to be supreme in India, but was to be assisted by a Council. India now has nine provinces, each under its own civil government, and independent of the others, but all subordinate to the authority of the Viceroy. In accordance with this Act the government of the Company, the famed 'John Company,' formally ceased on September 1, 1858; and the Queen was proclaimed throughout India in the following November, with Lord Canning for her first Viceroy. It was but fitting that the man who had borne the strain of that terrible crisis, who had brought our Indian Empire safely through it all, and who had had to endure so much obloquy and to live down so much calumny, should have his name consigned to history as that of the first of the line of British Viceroys in India.

It seems almost superfluous to say that so great a measure as the extinction of the East India Company did not pass without some protest and some opposition. The authorship of some of the protests makes them too remarkable to be passed over without a word. Among the ablest civil servants the East India Company ever had were James Mill and his son John Stuart Mill. Both had risen in succession to the same high post in the Company's service. The younger Mill was still an official of the Company when, as he has put it in his own words, 'it pleased Parliament in other words, Lord Palmerston, to put an end to the East India Company, as a branch of the Government of India under the Crown, and convert the administration of that country into a thing to be scrambled for by the second and third class of English parliamentary politicians.' 'I,' says Mr. Mill, 'was the chief manager of the resistance which the Company made to their own political extinction, and to the letters and petitions I wrote for them, and the concluding chapter of my treatise on representative government, I must refer for my opinions on the folly and mischief

of this ill-considered change. One of the remonstrances drawn up by Mr. Mill, and presented to Parliament on behalf of the East India Company, is as able a state paper probably as any in the archives of modern England. This is not the place, however, in which to enter on the argument it so powerfully sustained. 'It has been the destiny of the government of the East India Company,' says Mr. Mill, in the closing passage of his essay on 'Representative Government,' 'to suggest the true theory of the government of a semi-barbarous dependency by a civilised country, and after having done this, to perish. It would be a singular fortune if, at the end of two or three more generations, this speculative result should be the only remaining fruit of our ascendency in India; if posterity should say of us, that having stumbled accidentally upon better arrangements than our wisdom would ever have devised, the first use we made of our awakened reason was to destroy them, and allow the good which had been in course of being realised to fall through and be lost, from ignorance of the principles on which it depended.' '*Di meliora*,' Mr. Mill adds; and we are glad to think that after the lapse of more than twenty years, there is as yet no sign of the realisation of the fears which he expressed with so much eloquence and earnestness. Mr. Mill was naturally swayed by the force of association with, and confidence in, the great organisation with which he and his father had been connected so long; and, moreover, no one can deny that he has, in his protests, fairly presented some of the dangers that may now and then arise out of a system which throws the responsibility for the good government of India wholly on a body so likely to be alien, apathetic, unsympathetic, as the English Parliament. But the whole question was one of comparative danger and convenience; the balance of advantage certainly seemed, even as a matter of speculation, to be with the system of more direct government. It is a mistake, too, to suppose that it was the will, or the caprice, of Lord Palmerston that made the change. Rightly or wrongly, it is certain that almost the whole voice of English public opinion cried out for the abolition of the East India Company. It was the one thing which everybody could suggest to be done, at a time of excitement when everybody thought he was bound to suggest something. It would have required a minister less fond of popularity than Lord Palmerston to resist such an outcry, or pretend that he did not hear it. In this, as in so many other cases, Lord Palmerston only seemed to lead public opinion, while he was really following it. One other remark it is also fair to make. We have had no indications, as yet, of any likelihood that the administration of India is to become a thing to be scrambled for by second and third class parliamentary politicians. The administration of India means, of course, the viceroyalty. Now there

have been, since Lord Canning, five viceroys, and of these three at least were not parliamentary politicians at all. Sir John Lawrence never was in Parliament until he was raised to the peerage, after his return home from India. Lord Elgin may be fairly described as never having been in Parliament, unless in the technical sense which makes every man on whom a peer's title is conferred a parliamentary personage; and the same holds true of Lord Lytton, who had no more to do with Parliament than was involved in the fact of his having succeeded to his father's title. Lord Mayo and Lord Northbrook, to whom perhaps an invidious critic might apply the term second or third class parliamentary politicians, on the ground that neither had obtained very high parliamentary distinction, proved nevertheless very capable, and indeed excellent administrators of Indian affairs, and fully justified the choice of the ministers who appointed them. Indeed, the truth is that the change made in the mode of governing India by the act which we have just been describing, was more of name than of reality. India was ruled by a Governor-General and a board before; it has been ruled by a Governor-General, called a Viceroy, and a board since. The idea which Mr. Mill had evidently formed in his mind, of a restless and fussy Parliament for ever interfering in the affairs of India, proved to have been a false impression altogether. Parliament soon ceased to take the slightest interest, collectively, in the affairs of India. Once more it came to be observed that an Indian budget, or other question connected with the government of our great empire in the East, could thin the House as in the days before the Mutiny. Again, as before, some few men profoundly in earnest took care and thought on the subject of India, and were condemned to pour out the results of their study and experience to a listening Under-Secretary and a chill array of green leather benches. At intervals, when some piquant question arose, of little importance save to the Court official or the partisan, like the project for conferring an imperial crown, brand-new and showy as a stage diadem, on the wearer of the great historic emblem of English monarchy, then, indeed, public opinion condescended to think about India, and there were keen parliamentary debates and much excitement in fashionable circles. Sometimes, when there was talk of Russian ambition seeking, somehow, a pathway into India, a sort of public spirit was aroused, not, perhaps, wholly unlike the manly emotion of Squire Sullen, in the 'Beaux Stratagem,' when he discovers that a foreigner is paying court to the woman he has so long neglected. But as a rule the English Parliament has wholly falsified Mr. Mill's prediction, and has not intruded itself in any way upon the political administration of India.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE ORSINI BOMBS EXPLODE IN PARIS AND LONDON.

THE last chapter has told us that Lord Palmerston introduced a measure to transfer to the Crown the government of India, but that unexpected events in the meanwhile compelled him to resign office, and called Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli to power. These events had nothing to do directly with the general policy of Lord Palmerston or Lord Derby. At midday of January 14, 1858, no one could have had the slightest foreboding of anything about to happen which could affect the place of Lord Palmerston in English politics. He seemed to be as popular and as strong as a minister well could be. There had been a winter session called together on December 3, to pass a bill of indemnity for the Government, who had suspended the Bank Charter Act during the terrible money-panic of the autumn, and the failures of banks and commercial firms. The Bank was authorised, by the suspension of the Charter Act, to extend its circulation two millions beyond the limit of that Act. The effect of this step in restoring confidence was so great that the Bank had only to put in circulation some 900,000*l.* beyond the limit of 1844, and even that sum was replaced, and a certain reserve established by the close of the year. Most people thought the Government had met the difficulty promptly and well, and were ready to offer their congratulations. Parliament adjourned at Christmas, and was to meet early in February. The Princess Victoria, eldest daughter of the Queen, was to be married to the Prince Frederick William, eldest son of the then Prince of Prussia, now German Emperor, and it was to be Lord Palmerston's pleasant task, when Parliament resumed in February, to move a vote of congratulation to Her Majesty on her child's marriage. Meantime, however, on the evening of January 14, Felice Orsini, an Italian exile, made his memorable attempt to assassinate the Emperor of the French. Orsini lost himself, and he drew the English Government down at the same time.

Felice Orsini was well known in England. After his romantic escape from a prison at Mantua, he came to this country and delivered lectures in several towns. He described the incidents of his escape and denounced Austrian rule in Italy, and was made a lion of in many places. He was a handsome soldierly-looking man, with intensely dark eyes and dark beard, in appearance almost the model Italian conspirator of

romance. He was not an orator, but he was able to tell his story clearly and well. One great object which he had in view was to endeavour to rouse up the English people to some policy of intervention on behalf of Italy against Austria. It is almost impossible for a man like Orsini to take the proper measure of the enthusiasm with which he is likely to be received in England. He goes to several public meetings; he is welcomed by immense crowds; he is cheered to the echo; and he gets to be under the impression that the whole country is on his side and ready to do anything he asks for. He does not understand that the crowds go for the most part out of curiosity; that they represent no policy or action whatever, and that they will have forgotten all about him by the day after to-morrow. Of those who went to hear Orsini, and who applauded him so liberally, not one in ten probably had any distinct idea as to who he was or what cause he represented. He was an Italian exile who had escaped from tyranny of some sort somewhere, and he was a good-looking man; and that was enough for many or most of his audiences. But Orsini was thoroughly deceived. He convinced himself that he was forming public opinion in England; that he was inspiring the people, that the people would inspire the Government, and that the result would be an armed intervention on behalf of Lombardy and Venetia. At a meeting which he held in Liverpool a merchant of that town, who sympathised cordially with Orsini's cause, had the good sense to get up and tell Orsini that he was cruelly deceiving himself if he fancied that England either would or could take any step to intervene on behalf of the Italian province then held by Austria. Orsini at first thought little of this warning. After a while, however, he found out that the advice was sound and just. He saw that England would do nothing. He might have seen that even the English Liberals, with the exception of a very few enthusiasts, were entirely against his projects. They were in fact just as much opposed to the principle of intervention in the affairs of other States as the Conservatives. But Orsini set himself to devise explanations for what was simply the prudent and just determination of all the statesmen and leading politicians of the country. He found the explanation in the subtle influence of the Emperor of the French. It happened that during Orsini's residence in this country the Emperor and Empress of the French came on a visit to the Queen at Osborne; and Orsini saw in this a conclusive confirmation of his suspicions. Disappointed, despairing, and wild with anger against Louis Napoleon, he appears then to have allowed the idea to get possession of him that the removal of the Emperor of the French from the scene was an indispensable preliminary to any policy having for its object the emancipation

of Italy from Austrian rule. He brooded on this idea until it became a project and a passion. It transformed a soldier and a patriot into an assassin.

On January 14, Orsini and his fellow-conspirators made their attempt in the Rue Lepelletier in Paris. As the Emperor and Empress of the French were driving up to the door of the Opera-house in that street, Orsini and his companions flung at and into the carriage three shells or bombs shaped like a pear, and filled with detonating powder. The shells exploded, and killed and wounded many persons. So minute were the fragments into which the bombs burst that 516 wounds, great and little, were inflicted by the explosion. This attempt at assassination was unfavourably distinguished from most other attempts by the fact that it took no account of the number of innocent lives which it imperilled. The murderers of William the Silent, of Henry IV., of Abraham Lincoln, could at least say that they only struck at the objects of their hate. In Orsini's case the Emperor's wife, the Emperor's attendants and servants, the harmless and unconcerned spectators in the crowd, who had no share in Austrian misgovernment, were all exposed to the danger of death or of horrible mutilation. Ten persons were killed; 156 were wounded. For any purpose it aimed at the project was an utter failure. It only injured those who had nothing to do with Orsini's cause, or the condition of the Italian populations. We may as well dispose at once also of a theory which was for a time upheld by some who would not indeed justify or excuse Orsini's attempt, but who were inclined to believe that it was not made wholly in vain. Orsini failed, it was said; but nevertheless the Emperor of the French did soon after take up the cause of Italy; and he did so because he was afraid of the still living confederates of the Lombard Scaevola, and wished to purchase safety for himself by conciliating them. Even the Prince Consort wrote to a friend on April 11, 1858, about Louis Napoleon: 'I fear he is at this moment meditating some Italian development, which is to serve as a lightning conductor, for ever since Orsini's letter he has been all for Italian independence.' Historical revelations made at a later period show that this is altogether a mistake. We now know that at the time of the Congress of Paris Count Cavour had virtually arranged with the Emperor the plans of policy which were afterwards carried out, and that even before that time Cavour was satisfied in his own mind as to the ultimate certainty of Louis Napoleon's co-operation. Those who are glad to see Italy a nation may be glad too to know that Orsini's bombs had nothing to do with her success.

Orsini was arrested. Curiously enough his arrest was made more

easy by the fact that he himself received a wound from one of the fragments of shell, and he was tracked by his own bloodmarks. Great as his crime was he compelled a certain admiration from all men by the manner in which he bore his fate. He avowed his guilt, and made a strenuous effort to clear of all complicity in it a man who was accused of being one of the conspirators. He wrote from his prison to the Emperor, beseeching him to throw his influence into the national cause of Italy. He made no appeal on his own behalf. The Emperor, it is believed, was well inclined to spare his life; but the comprehensive heinousness of the crime which took in so many utterly blameless persons, rendered it almost impossible to allow the leading conspirator to escape. As it was, however, the French Government certainly showed no unreasonable severity. Four persons were put on trial as participators in the attempt, three of them having actually thrown the bombs. Only two, however, were executed, Orsini and Pierri; the other two were sentenced to penal servitude for life. This, on the whole, was merciful dealing. Three Fenians, it must be remembered, were executed in Manchester for an attempt to rescue some prisoners, in which one police officer was killed by one shot. Orsini's project was a good deal more criminal, most sane persons will admit, than a mere attempt to rescue a prisoner; and it was the cause not of one but of many deaths. Orsini died like a soldier, without bravado and without the slightest outward show of fear. As he and his companion Pierri were mounting the scaffold, he was heard to encourage the latter in a quiet tone. Pierri continued to show signs of agitation, and then Orsini was heard to say in a voice of gentle remonstrance, 'Try to be calm, my friend; try to be calm.'

France was not very calm under the circumstances. An outburst of anger followed the attempt in the Rue Lepelletier; but the anger was not so much against Orsini as against England. One of the persons charged along with Orsini, although he was not tried in Paris, for he could not be found there, was a Frenchman, Simon Bernard, who had long been living in London. It was certain that many of the arrangements for the plot were made in London. The bombs were manufactured in Birmingham, and were ordered for Orsini by an Englishman. It was known that Orsini had many friends and admirers in this country. The Imperialists in France at once assumed that England was a country where assassination of foreign sovereigns was encouraged by the population, and not discouraged by the laws. The French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Count Walewski, wrote a despatch, in which he asked whether England considered that hospitality was due to assassins. 'Ought English legislation,' he asked, 'to contribute to favour their designs and their attempts,

and can it continue to shelter persons who by their flagrant acts put themselves outside the pale of common rights, and under the ban of humanity?' The Duc de Persigny, then Ambassador of France in England, made a very foolish and unfortunate reply to a deputation from the Corporation of London, in which he took on himself to point out that if the law of England was strong enough to put down conspiracies for assassination it ought to be put in motion, and if it were not, it ought to be made stronger. Persigny did not indeed put this forward as his own contribution of advice to England. He gave it as an expression of the public feeling of France, and as an explanation of the anger which was aflame in that country. 'France,' he said, 'does not understand and cannot understand this state of things; and in that lies the danger, for she may mistake the true sentiments of her ally and may cease to believe in England's sincerity.' Talk of that kind would have been excusable and natural on the part of an Imperialist orator in the Corps Législatif in Paris; but it was silly and impertinent when it came from a professional diplomatist. That flavour of the canteen and the barrack-room, which the Prince Consort detected and disliked in the Emperor's associates, was very perceptible in Persigny's harangue. The barrack-room and the canteen, however, had much more to say in the matter. Addresses of congratulation were poured in upon the Emperor from the French army, and many of them were full of insulting allusions to England as the sheltering-ground of assassination. One regiment declared that it longed to demand an account from 'the land of impurity which contains the haunts of the monsters who are sheltered by its laws.' This regiment begged of the Emperor to give them the order, 'and we will pursue them even to their stronghold.' In another address, it was urged that 'the infamous haunt (*repaire infâme*) in which machinations so infernal are planned'—London, that is—'should be destroyed for ever.' Some of these addresses were inserted in the *Moniteur*, then the official organ of the French Government. It was afterwards explained that the official sanction thus apparently given to the rhodomontades of the French colonels was a mere piece of inadvertence. There were so many addresses sent in, it was said, that some of them escaped examination. Count Walewski expressed the regret of the Emperor that language and sentiments so utterly unlike his own should have found their way into publicity. It is certain that Louis Napoleon would never have deliberately sanctioned the obstreperous buffoonery of such sentences as we have referred to; but anyhow the addresses were published, were read in England, and aroused in this country an amount of popular resentment not unlikely to explode in utterances as vehement and thoughtless as those of the angry French colonels themselves.

Let us do justice to the French colonels. Their language was ludicrous: nothing but the grossness of its absurdity saved it from being intolerably offensive. But the feeling which dictated it was not unnatural. Foreign countries always find it hard to understand the principles of liberty which are established in England. They assume that if a State allows certain things to be done it must be because the State wishes to see them done. If men are allowed to plot against foreign sovereigns in England it can only be, they argue, because the English Government likes to have plots carried on against foreign sovereigns. It would be impossible to deny that people in this country are singularly thoughtless in their encouragement of any manner of foreign revolution. Even where there are restrictive laws public opinion will hardly sanction their being carried out. London is and long has been the head-quarters of revolutionary plot. No one knew that better than Louis Napoleon himself. No one had made more unscrupulous use of a domicile in London to carry out political and revolutionary projects. Associations have been formed in London to supply men and money to Don Carlos, to Queen Isabella, to the Polish Revolutionists, to Hungary, to Garibaldi, to the Southern Confederation, to the Circassians, to anybody and everybody who could say that he represented a defeat, or a victory, or a national cause, or anything. In 1860 Lord John Russell admitted in the House of Commons that it would be impossible to put into execution our laws against foreign enlistment, because every political party and almost every man was concerned in breaking them at one time or another. He referred to the fact that some forty years before the cause of Greece against Turkey had been taken up openly in London by public men of the highest mark, and that money, arms, and men were got together for Greece without the slightest pretence at concealment. While he was speaking a legion was being formed in one place to fight for Victor Emmanuel against the Pope; in another place to fight for the Pope against Victor Emmanuel. Every refugee was virtually free to make London a basis of operations against the Government which had caused his exile. There were, it is right to say, men who construed the conditions upon which they were sheltered in England with a conscientious severity. They held that they were protected by this country on the implied understanding that they took no part in any proceedings that might tend to embarrass her in her dealings with foreign States. They argued that the obligation on them, whether declared or not, was exactly the same as that which rests on one who asks and obtains the hospitality and shelter of a private house: the obligation not to involve his host in quarrels with his neighbours. M. Louis Blanc, for example, who lived some twenty years in England, declined on principle to take

part in secret political movements of any kind during all the time. But the great majority of the exiles of all countries were incessantly engaged in political plots and conspiracies; and undoubtedly some of these were nothing more or less than conspiracies to assassinate. Many of the leading exiles were intimately associated with prominent and distinguished Englishmen; and these same exiles were naturally associated to some extent with many of their own countrymen of a lower and less scrupulous class. It had therefore happened more than once before this time, and it happened more than once afterwards, that when a plot at assassination was discovered the plotters were found to have been on more or less intimate terms with some leading exiles in London, who themselves were well acquainted with eminent Englishmen. Men with a taste for assassination are to be found among the camp-followers of every political army. To assume that because the leaders of the party may have been now and then associated with them, they must therefore be acquainted with and ought to be held responsible for all their plots, is not less absurd than it would be to assume that an officer in a campaign must have been in the secret when some reprobate of his regiment was about to plunder a house. But the French colonels saw that the assassin this time was not a nameless scoundrel, but a man of birth and distinction like Felice Orsini, who had been received and welcomed everywhere in England. It is not very surprising if they assumed that his projects had the approval and favour of English public opinion. The French Government indeed ought to have known better. But the French Government lost for the moment its sense and self-control. A semi-official pamphlet, published in Paris, and entitled 'The Emperor Napoleon the Third and England,' actually went the ridiculous length of describing an obscure debating club in a Fleet Street public-house, where a few dozen honest fellows smoked their pipes of a night and talked hazy politics, as a formidable political institution where regicide was nightly preached to fanatical desperadoes.

Thus we had the public excited on both sides. The feeling of anger on this side was intensified by the conviction that France was insulting us because she thought England was crippled by her troubles in India, and had no power to resent an insult. It was while men here were smarting under this sense of wrong that Lord Palmerston introduced his famous measure for the suppression and punishment of conspiracies to murder. The bill was introduced in consequence of the despatch of Count Walewski. In that despatch it was suggested to the English Government that they ought to do something to strengthen their law. 'Full of confidence,' Count Walewski said, 'in the exalted reason of the English Cabinet, we abstain from all indication as regards the measures which

it may be suitable to take. We rely on them for a careful appreciation of the decision which they shall judge most proper, and we congratulate ourselves in the firm persuasion that we shall not have appealed in vain to their conscience and their loyalty.' The words were very civil. They were words as sweet as those of which Cassius says, that 'they rob the Hybla bees and leave them honeyless.' Nor was the request they contained in itself unreasonable. Long afterwards this country had to acknowledge, in reply to the demand of the United States, that a nation cannot get rid of her responsibility to a foreign people by pleading that her municipal legislation does not provide for this or that emergency. If somebody domiciled among us shoots his arrow over the house and hurts our foreign brother, it is not enough for us to say, when complaint is made, that we have no law to prevent people from shooting arrows out of our premises. The natural rejoinder is, 'Then you had better make such a law; you are not to injure us and get off by saying your laws allow us to be injured.' But the conditions under which the request was made by France had put England in the worse possible mood for acceding to it. We have all heard of the story of General Jackson, who was on one occasion very near refusing in wrath a reasonable and courteous request of the French Government, because his secretary, in translating the letter for Jackson, who did not know French, began with the words 'the French Government demands.' Jackson vehemently declared that if the French Government dared to demand anything of the United States they should not have it. It was only when it had been made quite clear to him that the French word *demander* did not by any means correspond with the English word 'demand,' that the angry soldier consented even to listen to the representation of France. The English public mind was now somewhat in Jackson's mood. It was under the impression that France was making a demand, and was not in the temper to grant it. Ominous questions were put to the Government in both Houses of Parliament. In the House of Commons Mr. Roebuck asked whether any communications had passed between the Governments of England and France with respect to the Alien Act or any portion of our criminal code. Lord Palmerston answered by mentioning Count Walewski's despatch, which he said should be laid before the House. He added a few words about the addresses of the French regiments, and pleaded that allowance should be made for the irritation caused by the attempt on the life of the Emperor. He was asked a significant question—Had the Government sent any answer to Count Walewski's despatch? No, was the reply; Her Majesty's Government had not answered it; not yet.

Two or three days after Lord Palmerston moved for leave to bring in

the Conspiracy to Murder Bill. The chief object of the measure was to make conspiracy to murder a felony instead of a mere misdemeanour, as it had been in England, and to render it liable to penal servitude for any period varying from five years to a whole life. Lord Palmerston made a feeble and formal attempt to prove that his bill was introduced simply as a measure of needed reform in our criminal legislation, and without special reference to anything that had happened in France. The law against conspiracy to murder was very light in England, he showed, and was very severe in Ireland. It was now proposed to make the law the same in both countries—that was all. Of course no one was deceived by this explanation. The bill itself was as much of a sham as the explanation. Such a measure would not have been of any account whatever as regarded the offences against which it was particularly directed. As Lord John Russell said, in the debate, it would argue great ignorance of human nature to imagine that a fanatic of the Orsini class, or any of those whom such a man could fascinate by his influence, would be deterred by the mere possibility of a sentence of penal servitude. Lord Palmerston, we may be sure, did not put the slightest faith in the efficacy of the piece of legislation he had undertaken to recommend to Parliament. It was just as in the case of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. He was compelled to believe that the Government would have to do something; and he came, after a while, to the conclusion that the most harmless measure would be the best. He had had an idea of asking Parliament to empower the Secretary of State to send out of the country foreigners whom the Government believed to be engaged in plotting against the life of a foreign sovereign; the Government being under obligation to explain the grounds for their belief and their action to a secret committee of Parliament, or to a committee composed of the three chiefs of the law courts. Such a measure as this would probably have proved effective; but it would have been impossible to induce the House of Commons to pass such a bill, or to entrust such power to any Government. Indeed, if it were not certain that Palmerston did entertain such a project, the language he used in his speech when introducing the Conspiracy Bill might lead one to believe that nothing could have been further from his thoughts. He disclaimed any intention to propose a measure which should give power to a Government to remove aliens on mere suspicion. He 'was sure it was needless for him to say he had no such intention.' He had, however, such an intention at one time. His biographer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley, is clear on that point, and there cannot be better authority. It must have been only for a moment that Palmerston even thought of making a proposal of the kind to an English Parliament. He had not been long

enough in the Home Office, it would seem, to understand thoroughly the temper of his countrymen. Indeed, in this instance he made a mistake every way. When he assented to the introduction of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill he was right in thinking that English public opinion wished to have something done; but in this case the inclination of public opinion was the other way; it wished to have nothing done—at least, just at that moment. Mr. Kinglake moved an amendment, formally expressing the sympathy of the House with the French people, on account of the attempt made against the Emperor, but declaring it inexpedient to legislate, in compliance with the demand made in Count Walewski's despatch of January 20, 'until further information is before it of the communications of the two Governments subsequent to the date of that despatch.' A discussion took place, in which Mr. Roebuck pointed out, very properly, that in any new measure of legislation it was not punishment of crime accomplished that was required, but discovery of crime meditated; and he also showed, with much effect, that in some cases, when the English Government had actually warned the Government of France that some plot was afoot, and that the plotters had left for Paris, the Paris police were unable to find them out, or to benefit in any way by the action of the English authorities. Mr. Disraeli voted for the bringing in of the bill, and made a cautious speech, in which he showed himself in favour of some sort of legislation, but did not commit himself to approval of that particular measure. This prudence proved convenient afterwards, when the crisis of the debate showed that it would be well for him to throw himself into the ranks of the opponents of the measure. The bill was read a first time. Two hundred and ninety-nine votes were for it; only ninety-nine against. But before it came on for a second reading public opinion was beginning to declare ominously against it. The fact that the Government had not answered the despatch of Count Walewski told heavily against them. It was afterwards explained that Lord Cowley had been instructed to answer it verbally, and that Lord Palmerston thought this course the more prudent, and the more likely to avoid an increase of irritation between the two countries. But public opinion in England was not now to be propitiated by counsels of moderation. The idea had gone abroad that Lord Palmerston was truckling to the Emperor of the French, and that the very right of asylum which England had so long afforded to the exiles of all nations, was to be sacrificed at the bidding of one who had been glad to avail himself of it in his hour of need.

This idea received support from the arrest of Dr. Simon Bernard, a French refugee, who was immediately put on trial as an accomplice in Orsini's plot. Bernard was a native of the South of France, a surgeon by

profession, and had lived a long time in England. He must have been, in outward aspect at least, the very type of a French Red Republican conspirator, to judge by the description given of him in the papers of the day. He is described as thin and worn, 'with dark restless eyes, sallow complexion, a thick moustache, and a profusion of long black hair combed backwards and reaching nearly to his shoulders, and exposing a broad but low and receding forehead.' The arrest of Bernard may have been a very proper thing, but it came in with most untimely effect upon the Government. It was understood to have been made by virtue of information sent over from Paris, and no one could have failed to observe that the loosest accusations of that kind were always coming from the French capital. Many persons were influenced in their belief of Bernard's innocence by the fact, which does assuredly count for something, that Orsini himself had almost with his dying breath declared that Bernard knew nothing of the intended assassination. Not a few made up their minds that he was innocent because the French Government accused him of guilt; and still more declared that innocent or guilty he ought not to be arrested by English authorities at the bidding of a French Emperor. At the same time the Cantillon story was revived; the story of the legacy left by the First Napoleon to the man who attempted to assassinate the Duke of Wellington, and it was insisted that the legacy had been paid to Cantillon by the authority of Napoleon III.

The debate was over and the Conspiracy Bill disposed of before the Bernard trial came to an end; but we may anticipate by a few days, and finish the Bernard story. Bernard was tried at the Central Criminal Court under existing law; he was defended by Mr. Edwin James, a well-known criminal lawyer, and he was acquitted. The trial was a practical evidence of the inutility of such special legislation as that which Lord Palmerston attempted to introduce. A new law of conspiracy could not have furnished any new evidence against Bernard or persuaded a jury to convict him on such evidence as there was. In the prevailing temper of the public the evidence should have been very clear indeed to induce an ordinary English jury to convict a man like Bernard, and the evidence of his knowledge of an intended assassination was anything but clear. Mr. Edwin James improved the hour. He made the trial an occasion for a speech denunciatory of tyrants generally, and he appealed in impassioned language to the British jury to answer the French tyrant by their verdict; which they did accordingly. Mr. James became a sort of popular hero for the time in consequence of his oration. He had rhetorical talent enough to make him a sort of Old Bailey Erskine, a Buzfuz Berryer. He set up for a liberal politician and tribune of the people, and was enabled

after a while to transfer his eloquence to the House of Commons. He vapoured about as a friend of Italy and Garibaldi and oppressed nationalities generally for a year or two after; got into money and other difficulties, and had to extinguish his political career suddenly and ignominiously. He was indeed heard of after. He went to America, and he came back again. But we need not speak of him any more.

In the midst of the commotion caused by Bernard's arrest, and by the offer of 200*l.* reward for the detection of an Englishman named Allsopp, also charged with complicity in the plot, Mr. Milner Gibson quietly gave notice of an amendment to the second reading of the Conspiracy Bill. The amendment proposed to declare that while the House heard with regret the allegation that the recent crime had been devised in England, and was always ready to assist in remedying any proved defects in the criminal law, 'yet it cannot but regret that her Majesty's Government, previously to inviting the House to amend the law of conspiracy by the second reading of this bill at the present time, have not felt it to be their duty to make some reply to the important despatch received from the French Government, dated Paris, January 20, 1858, and which has been laid before Parliament.' It might have been seen at once that this was a more serious business for the Government than Mr. Kinglake's amendment. In forecasting the result of a motion in the House of Commons much depends on the person who brings it forward. Has he a party behind him? If so, then the thing is important. If not, let his ability be what it will, his motion is looked on as a mere expression of personal opinion, interesting perhaps but without political consequence. Mr. Kinglake was emphatically a man without a party behind him; Mr. Gibson was emphatically a man of party and of practical politics. Mr. Kinglake was a brilliant literary man who had proved little better than a failure in the House; Mr. Gibson was a successful member of Parliament and nothing else. No one could have supposed that Mr. Gibson was likely to get up a discussion for the mere sake of expressing his own opinion or making a display. He was one of those who had been turned out of Parliament when Palmerston made his triumphant appeal to the country on the China question. He was one of those whom *Punch* made fun of by a new adaptation of the old '*il n'y a pas de quoi*' story; one of those who could not sit because they had no seats. Now he had just been returned to Parliament by another constituency; and he was not likely to be the mouthpiece of a merely formal challenge to the policy of the Government. When the debate on the second reading came on it began soon to be seen that the condition of things was grave for Lord Palmerston. Every hour and every speech made it more ominous. Mr. Gladstone

spoke eloquently against the Government. Mr. Disraeli suddenly discovered that he was bound to vote against the second reading, although he had voted for the first. The Government, he argued, had not yet answered the despatch as they might have done in the interval, and as they had not vindicated the honour of England, the House of Commons could not entrust them with the measure they demanded. Lord Palmerston saw that, in homely phrase, the game was up. He was greatly annoyed; he lost his temper, and did not even try to conceal the fact that he had lost it. He attacked Mr. Milner Gibson fiercely; declared that 'he appears for the first time in my memory as the champion of the dignity and honour of the country.' He wandered off into an attack on the whole Peace party, or Manchester School, and told some story about one of their newspapers which laid it down as a doctrine, that it would not matter if a foreign enemy conquered and occupied England so long as they were allowed to work their mills. All this was in curiously bad taste. For a genial and kindly as well as a graceful man, it was singular how completely Lord Palmerston always lost his good manners when he lost his temper. Under the influence of sudden anger, luckily a rare influence with him, he could be actually vulgar. He was merely vulgar, for example, when on one occasion, wishing to throw ridicule on the pacific principles of Mr. Bright, he alluded to him in the House of Commons as 'the honourable and reverend gentleman.' Lord Palmerston, in his reply to Mr. Milner Gibson, showed a positive spitefulness of tone and temper very unusual in him, and especially unbecoming in a losing man. A statesman may rise as he will, but he should fall with dignity. When the division was taken it appeared that there were 215 votes for the second reading and 234 against it. The Government, therefore, were left in a minority of 19; 146 Conservatives were in the majority and 84 Liberals. Besides these there were such of the Peelite party as Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cardwell, and Mr. Sidney Herbert. Lord Palmerston at once made up his mind to resign. His resignation was accepted. Not quite a year had passed since the general elections sent Lord Palmerston into power triumphant over the routed Liberals and the prostrate Manchester School. The leaders of the Manchester party were actually driven from their seats. There was not a Cobden or a Bright to face the conqueror in Parliament. Not quite a year, and now, on the motion of one of the lieutenants of that same party returned to their position again, Lord Palmerston is ejected from office. Palmerston once talked of having his 'tit-for-tat with John Russell.' The Peace party now had their tit-for-tat with him. 'Cassio hath beaten thee, and thou by that small hurt hast cashiered Cassio.'

Lord Palmerston had the satisfaction before he left office of being able to announce the capture of Canton. The operations against China had been virtually suspended, it will be remembered, when the Indian mutiny broke out. To adopt the happy illustration of a clever writer, England had dealt with China for the time as a backwoodsman sometimes does with a tree in the American forests—'girdled' it with the axe, so as to mark it for felling at a more convenient opportunity. She had now got the co-operation of France. France had a complaint of long standing against China on account of the murder of some missionaries, for which redress had been asked in vain. The Emperor of the French was very glad to have an opportunity of joining his arms with those of England in any foreign enterprise. It advertised the empire cheaply; it showed to Frenchmen how active the Emperor was, and how closely he had at heart the honour and the interests of France. An expedition to China in association with England could not be much of a risk, and would look well in the newspapers; whereas if England were to be allowed to go alone she would seem to be making too much of a position for herself in the East. There was, therefore, an allied attack made upon Canton, and of course the city was easily captured. Commissioner Yeh himself was taken prisoner, not until he had been sought for and hunted out in most ignominious fashion. He was found at last hidden away in some obscure part of a house. He was known by his enormous fatness. One of our officers caught hold of him; Yeh tried still to get away. A British seaman seized Yeh by his pigtail, twisted the tail several times round his hand, and the unfortunate Chinese dignitary was thus a helpless and ludicrous prisoner. He was not hurt in any serious way; but otherwise he was treated with about as much consideration as schoolboys show towards a captured cat. The whole story of his capture may be read in the journals of the day, in some of which it is treated as though it were an exploit worthy of heroes, and as if a Chinese with a pigtail were obviously a person on whom any of the courtesies of war would be thrown away. When it was convenient to let loose Yeh's pigtail, he was put on board an English man-of-war, and afterwards sent to Calcutta, where he died early in the following year. Unless report greatly belied him he had been exceptionally cruel, even for a Chinese official. It was said that he had ordered the beheading of about one hundred thousand rebels. There may be exaggeration in this number, but, as Voltaire says in another case, even if we reduce the total to half, 'cela serait encore admirable.'

The English and French Envoys, Lord Elgin and Baron Gros, succeeded in making a treaty with China. By the conditions of the treaty, England and France were to have ministers at the Chinese Court, on

certain special occasions at least, and China was to be represented in London and Paris; there was to be toleration of Christianity in China, and a certain freedom of access to Chinese rivers for English and French mercantile vessels, and to the interior of China for English and French subjects. China was to pay the expenses of the war. It was further agreed that the term 'barbarian' was no longer to be applied to Europeans in China. There was great congratulation in England over this treaty, and the prospect it afforded of a lasting peace with China. The peace thus procured lasted in fact exactly a year.

Lord Palmerston then was out of office. Having nothing in particular to do, he presently went over to Compiègne on a visit to the Emperor of the French. For the second time his friendship for Louis Napoleon had cost him his place.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

'ON THE TRUE FAITH OF A CHRISTIAN.'

When Mr. Disraeli became once more leader of the House of Commons, he must have felt that he had almost as difficult a path to tread as that of him described in 'Henry the Fourth,' who has to 'o'erwalk a current roaring loud on the unsteadfast footing of a spear.' The ministry of Lord Derby, whereof Mr. Disraeli was undoubtedly the sense-carrier, was not supported by a parliamentary majority, nor could it pretend to great intellectual and administrative ability. It had in its ranks two or three men of something like statesman capacity, and a number of respectable persons possessing abilities about equal to those of any intelligent business man or county magistrate. Mr. Disraeli of course became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Stanley undertook the Colonies; Mr. Walpole made a painstaking and conscientious Home Secretary, as long as he continued to hold the office. Lord Malmesbury muddled on with Foreign Affairs somehow; Lord Ellenborough's brilliant eccentric light perplexed for a brief space the Indian Department. General Peel was Secretary for War, and Mr. Henley President of the Board of Trade. Lord Naas, afterwards Lord Mayo, became Chief Secretary for Ireland, and was then supposed to be nothing more than a kindly, sweet-tempered man, of whom his most admiring friends would never have ventured to foreshadow such a destiny as that he should succeed to the place of a Canning and an Elgin, and govern the new India to which so many anxious eyes were turned. Sir John Pakington was made First Lord of the Admiralty, because a place of

some kind had to be found for him, and he was as likely to do well at the head of the navy as anywhere else. A ridiculous story, probably altogether untrue, used to be told of President Lincoln in some of the difficult days of the American Civil War. He wanted a commander-in-chief, and he happened to be in conversation with a friend on the subject of the war. Suddenly addressing the friend, he asked him if he had ever commanded an army. 'No, Mr. President,' was the reply. 'Do you think you could command an army?' 'I presume so, Mr. President; I know nothing to the contrary.' He was appointed Commander-in-Chief at once. One might without great stretch of imagination conceive of a conversation of the same kind taking place between Sir John Pakington and Lord Derby. Sir John Pakington had no reason to know that he might not prove equal to the administration of the navy, and he became First Lord of the Admiralty accordingly. No Conservative Government could be supposed to get on without Lord John Manners, and luckily there was the Department of Public Works for him.

Lord Stanley was regarded as a statesman of great and peculiar promise. The party to which he belonged were inclined to make him an object of especial pride because he seemed to have in a very remarkable degree the very qualities which most of their leading members were generally accused of wanting. The epithet which Mr. Mill at a later period applied to the Tories, that of the stupid party, was the expression of a feeling very common in the political world, and under which many of the Conservatives themselves winced. The more intelligent a Conservative was the more was he inclined to chafe at the ignorance and dulness of many of the party. It was therefore with particular satisfaction that intelligent Tories saw among themselves a young statesman, who appeared to have all those qualities of intellect and those educational endowments which the bulk of the party did not possess, and what was worse did not even miss. Lord Stanley had a calm meditative intellect. He studied politics as one may study a science. He understood political economy, that new-fangled science which had so bewildered his party, and of which the Peelites and the Manchester men made so much account. He had travelled much; not merely making the old-fashioned grand tour, which most of the Tory country gentlemen had themselves made, but visiting the United States and Canada and the Indies, East and West. He was understood to know all about geography and cotton and sugar; and he had come up into politics in a happy age when the question of Free Trade was understood to be settled. The Tories were proud of him, as a democratic mob is proud of an aristocratic leader, or as a working men's convention is proud of the co-operation of some distinguished scholar. Lord

Stanley was strangely unlike his father in intellect and temperament. The one man was indeed almost the very opposite of the other. Lord Derby was all instinct and passion; Lord Stanley was all method and calculation. Lord Derby amused himself in the intervals of political work by translating classic epics and odes; Lord Stanley beguiled an interval of leisure by the reading of Blue-books. Lord Derby's eloquence when at its worst became fiery nonsense; Lord Stanley's sank occasionally to be nothing better than platitude. The extreme of the one was rhapsody, and of the other commonplace. Lord Derby was too hot and impulsive to be always a sound statesman; Lord Stanley was too coldly methodical to be the statesman of a crisis. Both men were in a certain sense superficial and deceptive. Lord Derby's eloquence had no great depth in it; and Lord Stanley's wisdom often proved somewhat thin. The career of Lord Stanley did not afterwards bear out the expectations that were originally formed of him. He proved to be methodical, sensible, conscientious, slow. He belonged perhaps to that class of men about whom Goethe said, that if they could only once commit some extravagance we should have greater hopes of their future wisdom. He did not commit any extravagance; he remained careful, prudent, and slow. But at the time when he accepted the Indian Secretaryship it was still hoped that he would, to use a homely expression, warm to his work, and on both sides of the political contest people looked to him as a new and a great figure in Conservative politics. He was not an orator; he had nothing whatever of the orator in language or in temperament. His manner was ineffective; his delivery was decidedly bad. But his words carried weight with them, and even his commonplaces were received by some of his party as the utterances of an oracle. There were men among the Conservatives of the back benches who secretly hoped that in this wise young man was the upcoming statesman who was to deliver the party from the thraldom of eccentric genius, and of an eloquence which, however brilliantly it fought their battles, seemed to them hardly a respectable sort of gift to be employed in the service of gentlemanlike Tory principles.

Lord Stanley had been in office before. During his father's first administration he had acted as Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. On the death of Sir William Molesworth, Lord Palmerston had offered the Colonial Secretaryship to Lord Stanley; but the latter, although his Toryism was of the most moderate and liberal kind, did not see his way to take a seat in a Liberal administration. His appearance therefore as a Cabinet Minister in the Government formed by his father was an event looked to with great interest all over the country. The Liberals were not

without a hope that he might some day find himself driven by his conscientiousness and his clear unprejudiced intelligence into the ranks of avowed Liberalism. It was confidently predicted of him in a Liberal review two or three years after this time, that he would one day be found a prominent member of a Liberal Cabinet under the premiership of Mr. Gladstone. For the present, however, he is still the rising light—a somewhat cold and colourless light indeed—of Conservatism.

Arrayed against the Conservatives was a party disjointed indeed for the present, but capable at any moment, if they could only agree, of easily overturning the Government of Lord Derby. The superiority of the Opposition in debating power was simply overwhelming. In the House of Commons Mr. Disraeli was the only first-class debater, with the exception, perhaps, of the new Solicitor-General, Sir Hugh Cairns; and Sir Hugh Cairns, being new to office, was not expected as yet to carry very heavy metal in great debate. The best of their colleagues could only be called a respectable second class. Against them were Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, Mr. Gladstone, Sir James Graham, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Bright, every one of whom was a first-class debater; some of them great parliamentary orators; some, too, with the influence that comes from the fact of their having led ministries and conducted wars. In no political assembly in the world does experience of office and authority tell for more than in the House of Commons. To have held office confers a certain dignity even on mediocrity. The man who has held office, and who sits on the front bench opposite the ministry, has a sort of prescriptive right to be heard whenever he stands up to address the House, in preference to the most rising and brilliant talker who has never yet been a member of an Administration. Mr. Disraeli had opposed to him not merely the eloquence of Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright, but the authority of Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston. It required much dexterity to make a decent show of carrying on a Government under such conditions. Mr. Disraeli well knew that his party held office only on sufferance from their opponents. If they attempted nothing, they were certain to be censured for inactivity; if they attempted anything, there was the chance of their exposing themselves to the combined attack of all the fractions of the Liberal party. Luckily for them it was not easy to bring about such a combination just yet; but whenever it came, there was foreshown the end of the Ministry.

Lord Derby's Government quietly dropped the unlucky Conspiracy Bill. England and France were alike glad to be out of the difficulty. There was a short interchange of correspondence, in which the French Government explained that they really had meant nothing in particular,

and it was then announced to both Houses of Parliament that the misunderstanding was at an end, and that friendship had set in again. We have seen already how the India Bill was carried. Lord Derby's tenure of office was made remarkable by the success of one measure which must have given much personal satisfaction to Mr. Disraeli. The son of a Jewish father, the descendant of an ancient Jewish race, himself received as a child into the Jewish community, Mr. Disraeli had since his earliest years of intelligence been a Christian. 'I am, as I have ever been,' he said himself when giving evidence once in a court of law, 'a Christian.' But he had never renounced his sympathies with the race to which he belonged, and the faith in which his fathers worshipped. He had always stood up for the Jews. He had glorified the genius and the influence of the Jews in many pages of romantic, high-flown, and sometimes very turgid eloquence. He had in some of his novels seemingly set about to persuade his readers that all of good and great the modern world had seen was due to the unceasing intellectual activity of the Jew. He had vindicated with as sweeping a liberality the virtues of the Jewish race. In one really fine and striking sentence he declares that 'a Jew is never seen upon the scaffold unless it be at an *auto-da-fé*.' 'Forty years ago,' he says in his 'Lord George Bentinck,'—'not a longer period than the children of Israel were wandering in the desert—the two most dishonoured races in Europe were the Attic and the Hebrew, and they were the two races that had done most for mankind.'

Mr. Disraeli had the good fortune to see the civil emancipation of the Jews accomplished during the time of his leadership of the House of Commons. It was a coincidence merely. He had always assisted the movement towards that end; unlike some other men who carried on their faces the evidence of their Hebrew extraction, and who yet made themselves conspicuous for their opposition to it. But the success did not come from any inspiration of his; and most of his colleagues in power resisted it as long as they could. His former chief, Lord George Bentinck, it will be remembered, had resigned his leadership of the party in the House of Commons, because of the complaints made when he spoke and voted for the removal of Jewish disabilities. It was in July 1858, that the long political and sectarian struggle came to an end. Baron Lionel Nathan de Rothschild, who has but lately died, was allowed to take his seat in the House of Commons on the 26th of that month, as one of the representatives of the City of London, and the controversy about Jewish disabilities was over at last. It is not uninteresting, before we trace the history of this struggle to its close, to observe how completely the conditions under which it was once carried on had changed in recent years. Of late the opposition to

the claims of the Jews came almost exclusively from the Tories, and especially from the Tories in the House of Lords, from the high churchmen and from the bishops. A century before that time the bishops were for the most part very willing that justice should be done to the Jews; and statesmen and professional politicians, looking at the question perhaps rather from the view of obvious necessity and expediency, were well-inclined to favour the claim made for rather than by their Jewish fellow-subjects. But at that time the popular voice cried out furiously against the Jews. The old traditions of calumny and hatred still had full influence, and the English people, as a whole, were determined that they would not admit the Jews to the rights of citizenship. They would borrow from them, buy from them, accept any manner of service from them, but they would not allow of their being represented in Parliament. As time went on all this feeling changed. The public in general became either absolutely indifferent to the question of Jewish citizenship or decidedly in favour of it. No statesman had the slightest excuse for professing to believe that an outcry would be raised by the people if he attempted to procure the representation of Jews by Jews in Parliament. We have seen how by steps the Jews made their way into municipal office and into the magistracy. At the same time persistent efforts were being made to obtain for them the right to be elected to the House of Commons. On April 5, 1830, Mr. Robert Grant, then a colleague of one of the Gurney family in the representation of Norwich, moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal the civil disabilities affecting British-born subjects professing the Jewish religion. The claim which Mr. Grant made for the Jews was simply that they should be allowed to enjoy all those rights which we may call fundamental to the condition of the British subject, without having to profess the religion of the State. At that time the Jews were unable to take the oath of allegiance, passed in Elizabeth's reign, although it had nothing in its substance or language opposed to their claims, inasmuch as it was sworn on the Evangelists. Nor could they take the oath of abjuration, intended to guard against the return of the Stuarts, because that oath contained the words 'on the true faith of a Christian.' Before the repeal of the Test and Corporations Act in 1828, the Sacrament had to be taken as a condition of holding any corporate office, and had to be taken before admission. In the case of offices held under the Crown it might be taken after admission. Jews, however, did obtain admission to corporate offices, not expressly as Jews, but as all Dissenters obtained it; that is to say by breaking the law, and having an annual indemnity bill passed to relieve them from the penal consequences. The Test and Corporations Act put an end to this anomaly as regarded the Dissenters, but it uncon-

sciously imposed a new disability on the Jew. The new declaration, substituted for the old oath, contained the words 'on the true faith of a Christian.' 'The operation of the law was fatal,' says Sir Erskine May, 'to nearly all the rights of a citizen. A Jew could not hold any office, civil, military, or corporate. He could not follow the profession of the law as barrister or attorney, or attorney's clerk; he could not be a schoolmaster or an usher at a school. He could not sit as a member of either House of Parliament, nor even exercise the electoral franchise, if called upon to take the elector's oath.' Thus, although no special Act was passed for the exclusion of the Jew from the rights of citizenship, he was effectually shut up in a sort of political and social Ghetto.

The debate on Mr. Grant's motion was made memorable by the fact that Macaulay delivered then his maiden speech. He rose at the same time with Sir James Mackintosh, and according to the graceful usage of the House of Commons, the new member was called on to speak. We need not go over the arguments used in the debate. Public opinion has settled the question so long and so completely that they have little interest for a time like ours. One curious argument is, however, worth a passing notice. One speaker, Sir John Wrottesley, declared that when it was notorious that seats were to be had in that House to any extent for money, he could not consent to allow anyone to become a member who was not also a Christian. Bribery and corruption were so general and so bad that they could not with safety to the State be left to be the privilege of any but Christians. 'If I be drunk,' says Master Slender, 'I'll be drunk with those that have the fear of God and not with drunken knaves.' The proposal for the admission of Jews to Parliament was supported by Lord John Russell, O'Connell, Brougham and Mackintosh. Its first reading—for it was opposed even on the first reading—was carried by a majority of eighteen; but on the motion for the second reading the bill was thrown out by a majority of sixty-three, the votes for it being 165 and those against it 228. In 1833 Mr. Grant introduced his bill again, and this time was fortunate enough to pass it through the Commons. The Lords rejected it by a majority of fifty. The following year told a similar story. The Commons accepted; the Lords rejected. Meantime the Jews were being gradually relieved from other restrictions. A clause in Lord Denman's Act for amending the laws of evidence allowed all persons to be sworn in courts of law in the form which they held most binding on their conscience. Lord Lyndhurst succeeded in passing a bill for the admission of Jews to corporate offices. Jews had, as we have already seen, been admitted to the shrievalty and the magistracy in the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign. In 1848 the struggle for their admission to Parliament

was renewed, but the Lords still held out and would not pass a bill. Meanwhile influential Jews began to offer themselves as candidates for seats in Parliament. Mr. Salomons contested Shoreham and Maidstone successively and unsuccessfully. In 1847 Baron Lionel Rothschild was elected one of the members for the City of London. He resigned his seat when the House of Lords threw out the Jews' bill, and stood again and was again elected. It was not, however, until 1850 that the struggle was actually transferred to the floor of the House of Commons. In that year Baron Rothschild presented himself at the table of the House as O'Connell had done, and offered to take the oaths in order that he might be admitted to take his seat. For four sessions he had sat as a stranger in the House of which he had been duly elected a member by the votes of one of the most important English constituencies. Now he came boldly up to the table and demanded to be sworn. He was sworn on the Old Testament. He took the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy; but when the Oath of Abjuration came he omitted from it the words 'on the true faith of a Christian.' He was directed to withdraw, and it was decided that he could neither sit nor vote unless he would consent to take the oath of abjuration in the fashion prescribed by the law. In other words, he could only sit in the House of Commons on condition of his perjuring himself. Had he sworn 'on the true faith of a Christian,' the House of Commons, well knowing that he had sworn to a falsehood, would have admitted him as one of its members.

Baron Rothschild quietly fell back to his old position. He sat in one of the seats under the gallery, a place to which strangers are admitted, but where also members occasionally sit. He did not contest the matter any further. Mr. David Salomons was inclined for a rougher and a bolder course. He was elected for Greenwich in 1851, and he presented himself as Baron Rothschild had done. The same thing followed; he refused to say the words, 'on the true faith of a Christian,' and he was directed to withdraw. He did withdraw. He sat below the bar. A few evenings after a question was put to the Government by a member friendly to the admission of Jews, Sir Benjamin Hall, afterwards Lord Llanover: 'If Mr. Salomons should take his seat, would the Government sue him for the penalties provided by the Act of Parliament in order that the question of right might be tried by a court of law?' Lord John Russell replied on the part of the Government that they did not intend to take any proceedings; in fact, implied that they considered it no affair of theirs. Then Sir Benjamin Hall announced that Mr. Salomons felt he had no alternative but to take his seat and let the question of right be tested in that way. Forthwith, to the amazement and horror of steady old constitutional

members, Mr. Salomons, who had been sitting below the bar, calmly got up, walked into the sacred precincts of the House, and took his seat among the members. A tumultuous scene followed. Half the House shouted indignantly to Mr. Salomons to 'withdraw, withdraw;' the other half called out encouragingly to him to keep his place. The perplexity was indescribable. What is to be done with a quiet and respectable gentleman who insists that he is a member of Parliament, comes and takes his seat in the House, and will not withdraw? To be sure if he were an absolute intruder he could be easily removed by the Sergeant-at-Arms and his assistants. But in such a case, unless indeed the intruder were a lunatic, he would hardly think of keeping his place when he had been bidden by authority to take himself off. Mr. Salomons, however, had undoubtedly been elected member for Greenwich by a considerable majority. His constituents believed him to be their lawful representative, and in fact had obtained from him a promise that if elected he would actually take his seat. Even then, perhaps, something might have been done if the House in general had been opposed to the claim of Mr. Salomons and of Greenwich. When Lord Cochrane escaped from prison and presented himself in the House from which he had been expelled, he, too, was ordered to withdraw. He, too, refused to do so. The Speaker directed that he should be removed by force. Cochrane had a giant's strength, and on this occasion he used it like a giant. He struggled hard against the efforts of many officials to remove him, and some of the woodwork of the benches was actually torn from its place before the gallant seaman could be got out of the House. But in the case of Lord Cochrane the general feeling of the House was with the authorities and against the expelled member, who, however, happened to be in the right while the House was in the wrong. The case of Mr. Salomons was very different. Many members were of opinion, and eminent lawyers were among them, that in the strictest and most technical view of the law, he was entitled to take his seat. Many more were convinced that the principle which excluded him was stupid and barbarous, and that the course he was at present taking was necessary for the purpose of obtaining its immediate repeal.

Therefore any idea of expelling Mr. Salomons was out of the question. The only thing that could be done was to set to work and debate the matter. Lord John Russell moved a resolution to the effect that Mr. Salomons be ordered to withdraw. Lord John Russell, it need hardly be said, was entirely in favour of the admission of Jews, but thought Mr. Salomons's course irregular. Mr. Bernal Osborne moved an amendment declaring Mr. Salomons entitled to take his seat. A series of irregular

discussions, varied and enlivened by motions for adjournment, took place; and Mr. Salomons not only voted in some of the divisions, but actually made a speech. He spoke calmly and well, and was listened to with great attention. He explained that in the course he had taken he was acting in no spirit of contumacy or presumption, and with no disregard for the dignity of the House, but that he had been lawfully elected, and that he felt bound to take his seat for the purpose of asserting his own rights and those of his constituents. He intimated also that he would withdraw if just sufficient force were used to make him feel that he was acting under coercion. The motion that he be ordered to withdraw was carried. The Speaker requested Mr. Salomons to withdraw. Mr. Salomons held his place. The Speaker directed the Sergeant-at-Arms to remove Mr. Salomons. The Sergeant-at-Arms approached Mr. Salomons and touched him on the shoulder, and Mr. Salomons then quietly withdrew. The farce was over. It was evident to everyone that Mr. Salomons had virtually gained his object, and that something must soon be done to get the House of Commons and the country out of the difficulty. It is curious that even in ordering him to withdraw, the Speaker called Mr. Salomons 'the honourable member.'

Mr. Salomons did well to press his rights in that practical way upon the notice of the House. It is one of the blots upon our parliamentary system that a great question, like that of the removal of Jewish disabilities, is seldom settled upon its merits. Parliament rarely bends to the mere claims of reason and justice. Some pressure has almost always to be put on it to induce it to see the right. Its tendency is always to act exactly as Mr. Salomons himself formally did in this case; to yield only when sufficient pressure has been put on it to signify coercion. Catholic Emancipation was carried by such a pressure. The promoters of the Sunday Trading Bill yield to a riot in Hyde Park. A Tory Government turn Reformers in obedience to a crowd who pull down the railing of the same enclosure. A Chancellor of the Exchequer modifies his budget in deference to a demonstration of match-selling boys and girls. In all these instances it was right to make the concession; but the concession was not made because it was right. The Irish Home Rulers, or some of them at least, are convinced that they will carry Home Rule in the end by the mere force of a pressure brought to bear on Parliament; and their expectation is justified by all previous experience. They have been told often enough that they must not expect to carry it by argument. If Parliamentary institutions do really come to be discredited in this country, as many people love to predict, one especial reason will be this very experience on the part of the public, that Parliament has invariably

conceded to pressure the reforms which it persistently denied to justice. A reform is first refused without reason, to be at last conceded without grace.

Mr. Salomons acted wisely therefore for the cause he had at heart when he thrust himself upon the House of Commons. The course taken by Baron Rothschild was more dignified no doubt; but it did not make much impression. The victory seems to us to have been practically won when Mr. Salomons sat down after having addressed the House of Commons from his place among the members. But it was not technically won just then, nor for some time after. Two actions were brought against Mr. Salomons, not by the Government, to recover penalties for his having unlawfully taken his seat. One of the actions was withdrawn, the object of both alike being to get a settlement of the legal question, for which one trial would be as good as twenty. The action came on for trial in the Court of Exchequer, on December 9, 1851, before Mr. Baron Martin and a special jury. Baron Martin suggested that, as the question at issue was one of great importance, a special case should be prepared for the decision of the full court. This was done, and the case came before the court in January 1852. The issue really narrowed itself to this: were the words 'on the true faith of a Christian' merely a form of affirmation, or were they purposely inserted in order to obtain a profession of Christian faith? Did not the framers of the measure merely put in such words as at the moment seemed to them most proper to secure a true declaration from the majority of those to be sworn, and with the understanding that in exceptional cases other forms of asseveration might be employed as more suited to other forms of faith? Or were the words put in for the express purpose of making it certain that none but Christians should take the oath? We know as a matter of fact that the words were not put in with any such intention. No one was thinking about the Jews when the asseveration was thus constructed. Still the Court of Exchequer decided by three voices to one that the words must be held in law to constitute a specially Christian oath, which could be taken by no one but a Christian, and without taking which no one could be a Member of Parliament; of that Parliament which had had Bolingbroke for a leader, and Gibbon for a distinguished member.

The legal question then being settled, there were renewed efforts made to get rid of the disabilities by an Act of Parliament. The House of Commons continued to pass Bills to enable Jews to sit in Parliament, and the House of Lords continued to throw them out. Lord John Russell, who had taken charge of the measure, introduced his Bill early in 1858. The Bill was somewhat peculiar in its construction. On a former occa-

sion the House of Lords found another excuse for not passing a measure for the same purpose, in the fact that it mixed up a modification of the Oath of Supremacy with the question of the relief of the Jews. In the present measure the two questions were kept separate. The Bill proposed to reconstruct the oath altogether. Some obsolete words about the Pretender and the Stuart Family were to be taken out. The asseverations relating to succession, supremacy, and allegiance were to be condensed into one oath, to which were added the words 'on the true faith of a Christian.' Thus far the measure merely reconstructed the form of oath so as to bring it into accord with the existing conditions of things. But then there came a separate clause in the Bill, providing that where the oath had to be administered to a Jew the words 'on the true faith of a Christian' might be left out. This was a very sensible and simple way of settling the matter. It provided a rational form of oath for all sects alike; it got rid of obsolete anomalies, and it likewise relieved the Jews from the injustice which had been unintentionally imposed on them. Unfortunately the very convenience of the form in which the Bill was drawn only put, as it will be seen, a new facility into the hands of the Anti-reformers in the House of Lords for again endeavouring to get rid of it. Lord John Russell had no difficulty with the House of Commons. He had brought up his Bill in good time, in order that it might reach the House of Lords as quickly as possible; and it passed a second reading in the Commons without any debate. When it came up to the House of Lords, the majority simply struck out the particular clause relating to the Jews. This made the Bill of no account whatever for the purpose it specially had in view. The Commons, on the motion of Lord John Russell, refused to assent to the alteration made by the Lords, and appointed a committee to draw up a statement of their reasons for refusing to agree to it. On the motion of Mr. Duncombe, it was actually agreed that Baron Rothschild should be a member of the committee, although a legal decision had declared him not to be a member of the House. During the debates to which all this led, Lord Lucan made a suggestion of compromise in the House of Lords which proved successful. He recommended the insertion of a clause in the Bill allowing either House to modify the form of oath according to its pleasure. Lord John Russell objected to this way of dealing with a great question, but did not feel warranted in refusing the proposed compromise. A Bill was drawn up with the clause suggested, and it was rattled, if we may use such an expression, through both Houses. It passed with the Oaths Bill, which the Lords had mutilated, and which now stood as an independent measure. A Jew, therefore, might be a member of the House of Com-

mons, if it chose to receive him, and might be shut out of the House of Lords if that House did not think fit to let him in. More than that, the House of Commons might change its mind at any moment, and by modifying the form of oath shut out the Jews again; or shut out any new Jewish candidates. Of course such a condition of things as that could not endure. An Act passed not long after which consolidated the Acts referring to Oaths of Allegiance, Abjuration, and Supremacy, and enabled Jews on all occasions whatever to omit the words 'on the true faith of a Christian.' Thus the Jew was at last placed on a position of political equality with his Christian fellow-subjects, and an anomaly and a scandal was removed from our legislation.

About the same time as that which saw Baron Rothschild admitted to take his seat in the House of Commons, the absurd property qualification for members of Parliament was abolished. This ridiculous system originally professed to secure that no man should be a member of the House of Commons who did not own a certain amount of landed property. The idea of defining a man's fitness to sit in Parliament according to his possession of landed property, was in itself preposterous; but such as the law was it was evaded every day. It had not the slightest real force. Fictitious conveyances were issued as a matter of course. Anyone who desired a seat in Parliament could easily find some friend or patron who would convey to him by formal deed the fictitious ownership of landed property enough to satisfy the requirements of the law. This was done usually with as little pretence at concealment as the borrowing of an umbrella. It was perfectly well known to everybody that a great many members of the House of Commons did not possess, and did not even pretend to possess, a single acre of land their own property. What made the thing more absurd was that men who were rich enough to spend thousands of pounds in contesting boroughs and counties, had often to go through this form of having a fictitious conveyance made to them, because they did not happen to have invested any part of their wealth in land. Great city magnates, known for their wealth, and known in many cases for their high personal honour as well, had to submit to this foolish ceremonial. The property qualification was a device of the reign of Anne. The evasions of it became so many and so notorious that in George II.'s time an Act was passed making it necessary for every member to take an oath that he possessed the requisite amount of property. In the present reign a declaration was substituted for the oath, and it was provided that if a man had not landed property, it would be enough for him to prove that he had funded property to the same amount—600*l.* a year for counties and 300*l.* for boroughs. The manufacture of fictitious qualifications went

on as fast as ever. There were many men in good position, earning large incomes by a profession or otherwise, who yet had not realised money enough to put them in possession of a property of 600*l.* or 300*l.* a year —it might take 10,000*l.* to secure an income of 300*l.* a year; 20,000*l.* to secure 600*l.* a year. Scores of members of Parliament were well known not to have any such means. To make the anomaly more absurd, it should be noted that there was no property qualification in Scotland, and the Scotch members were then, as now, remarkable for their respectability and intelligence. Members for the Universities, too, were elected without a property qualification. Mr. Locke King stated in the House of Commons that after every general election there were from fifty to sixty cases in which it was found that persons had declared themselves to be possessed of the requisite qualification who were notoriously not in possession of it. Many men, too, it was well known, were purposely qualified by wealthy patrons, in order that they might sit in Parliament as mere nominees and political servants.

As usual with Parliament, this anomaly was allowed to go on until a sudden scandal made its abolition necessary. One luckless person, who probably had no position and few friends, was actually prosecuted for having made a false declaration as to his property qualification. He had been a little more indiscreet, or a little more open in his performance, than other people, and he was pounced upon by 'old father antic,' the law. This practically settled the matter. Everyone knew that many other members of Parliament deserved in point of fact just as well as he the three months' imprisonment to which he was sentenced. Mr. Locke King introduced a Bill to abolish the property qualification hitherto required from the representatives of English and Irish constituencies, and it became law in a few days.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

When Lord Ellenborough abruptly resigned the place of President of the Board of Control he was succeeded by Lord Stanley, who, as we have seen already, became Secretary of State for India, under the new system of government. Lord Stanley had been Secretary for the Colonies, and in this office he was succeeded by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton. For some time previously Sir Edward Lytton had been taking so marked a place in

Parliamentary life as to make it evident that when his party came into power, he was sure to have a chance of distinguishing himself in office. Bulwer's political career had up to this time been little better than a failure. He started in public life as a Radical and a friend of O'Connell; he was indeed the means of introducing Mr. Disraeli to the leader of the Irish party. He began his Parliamentary career before the Reform Bill. He was elected for St. Ives in 1831. After the passing of the Bill, he represented Lincoln for several years. At the general election of 1841 he lost his seat, and it was not until July 1852, that he was again returned to Parliament. This time he came in as member for the county of Herts. In the interval many things had happened—to quote the expression of Mr. Disraeli in 1874. Lytton had succeeded to wealth and to landed estates, and he had almost altogether changed his political opinions. From a poetic Radical he had become a poetic Conservative. In the 'Parliamentary Companion' for the year 1855 we find him thus quaintly described—by his own hand it may be assumed: 'Concurs in the general policy of Lord Derby; would readjust the Income-tax, and mitigate the duties on Malt, Tea, and Soap; some years ago advocated the Ballot, but seeing its utter inefficiency in France and America can no longer support that theory; will support education on a religious basis, and vote for a repeal of the Maynooth Grant.' It will perhaps be assumed from this confession of faith, that Lytton had not very clear views of any kind as to practical politics. It probably seemed a graceful and poetic thing, redolent of youth and Ernest Maltravers, to stand forth as an impassioned Radical in early years; and it was quite in keeping with the progress of Ernest Maltravers to tone down into a thoughtful Conservative, opposing the Maynooth Grant and mitigating the duty on Malt and Soap, as one advanced in years, wealth, and gravity. At all events, it was certain that whatever Lytton attempted he would in the end carry to some considerable success. His first years in the House of Commons had come to nothing. When he lost his seat most people fancied that he had accepted defeat, and had turned his back on Parliamentary life for ever. But Lytton possessed a marvellously strong will, and had a faith in himself which almost amounted to genius. When he wrote a play which proved a distinct failure, some of the leading critics assured him that he had no dramatic turn at all. He believed on the contrary that he had; and he determined to write another play which should be of all things dramatic, and which should hold the stage. He went to work and produced the 'Lady of Lyons;' a play filled with turgid passages and preposterous situations, but which has nevertheless in so conspicuous a degree the dramatic or theatric qualities that it has always held the stage, and has

never been wholly extinguished by any change of fashion or of fancy. In much the same way Sir Edward Lytton seems to have made up his mind that he would compel the world to confess him capable of playing the part of a politician. We have in a former chapter of this work alluded to the physical difficulties which stood in the way of his success as a Parliamentary speaker, and in spite of which he accomplished his success. He was deaf, and his articulation was so defective that those who heard him speak in public for the first time often found themselves unable to understand him. Such difficulties would assuredly have scared any ordinary man out of the Parliamentary arena for ever. But Lytton seems to have determined that he would make a figure in Parliament. He set himself to public speaking as coolly as if he were a man, like Gladstone or Bright, whom nature had marked out for such a competition by her physical gifts. He became a decided, and even in a certain sense, a great success. He could not strike into a debate actually going on; his defect of hearing shut him off from such a performance; and no man who is not a debater will ever hold a really high position in the House of Commons. But he could review a previous night's arguments in a speech abounding in splendid phrases and brilliant illustrations. He could pass for an orator. He actually did pass for an orator. Mr. Disraeli seems to have admired his speaking with a genuine and certainly a disinterested admiration; for he described it as though it were exactly the kind of eloquence in which he would gladly have himself excelled if he could. In fact, Lytton reached the same relative level in Parliamentary debate that he had reached in fiction and the drama. He contrived to appear as if he ought to rank among the best of the craftsmen.

Sir Edward Lytton, as Secretary for the Colonies, seemed resolved to prove by active and original work that he could be a practical colonial statesman as well as a novelist, a playwright, and a Parliamentary orator. He founded the Colony of British Columbia, which at first was to comprise all such territories within the Queen's dominions 'as are bounded to the South by the frontier of the United States of America, to the East by the main chain of the Rocky Mountains, to the North by Simpson's River and the Finlay branch of the Peace River, and to the West by the Pacific Ocean.' It was originally intended that the colony should not include Vancouver's Island, but her Majesty was allowed, on receiving an address from the two Houses of the Legislature of Vancouver's Island, to annex that island to British Columbia. Vancouver's Island was in fact incorporated with British Columbia in 1866, and British Columbia was united with the Dominion of Canada in 1871.

Something, however, more strictly akin to Sir Edward Lytton's per-

sonal tastes was found in the mission to which he invited Mr. Gladstone. There had long been dissatisfaction and even disturbance in the Ionian Islands. These seven islands were constituted a sort of republic or commonwealth by the Treaty of Vienna. But they were consigned to the protectorate of Great Britain, which had the right of maintaining garrisons in them. Great Britain used to appoint a Lord High Commissioner, who was generally a military man, and whose office combined the duties of Commander-in-Chief with those of Civil Governor. The little republic had a Senate of six members and a Legislative Assembly of forty members. It seems almost a waste of words to say that the islanders were not content with British government. For good or ill, the Hellenes wherever they are found are sure to be filled with an impassioned longing for Hellenic independence. The people of the Ionian Islands were eager to be allowed to enter into one system with the kingdom of Greece. It was idle to try to amuse them by telling them they constituted an independent republic, and were actually governing themselves. A duller people than the Greeks of the islands could not be deluded into the idea that they were a self-governing people, while they saw themselves presided over by an English Lord High Commissioner who was also the Commander-in-Chief of a goodly British army garrisoned in their midst. They saw that the Lord High Commissioner had a way of dismissing the republican Parliament whenever he and they could not get on together. They knew that if they ventured to resist his orders, English soldiers would make short work of their effort at self-assertion. They might, therefore, well be excused if they failed to see much of the independent republic in such a system. It is certain that they got a great deal of material benefit from the presence of the energetic road-making British power. But they wanted to be above all things Greek. Their national principles and aspirations, their personal vanities, their truly Greek restlessness and craving for novelty, all combined to make them impatient of that foreign protectorate which was really foreign government. The popular constitution which had been given to the Septinsular Republic some ten years before Sir E. B. Lytton's time had enabled Hellenic agitation to make its voice and its claims more effectual. In England, after the usual fashion, a great many shallow politicians were raising an outcry against the popular constitution, as if it were the cause of all the confusion. Because it enabled discontent to make its voice heard they condemned it as the cause of the discontent. They would have been for silencing the alarm-bell immediately, and then telling themselves that all was safe. As was but natural, local politicians rose to popularity in the islands in proportion as they were loud in their denunciation of foreign rule, and in their demands for

union with the kingdom of Greece. Anybody might surely have foretold all this years before. It might have been taken for granted that so long as any sort of independent Greek kingdom held its head above the waters the Greek populations everywhere would sympathise with its efforts, and long to join their destiny with it. Many English public men, however, were merely angry with these pestilential Greeks who did not know what was good for them. A great English journal complained, with a simple egotism that was positively touching, that in spite of all argument the National Assembly, the municipalities, and the press of the Ionian Islands had now concentrated their pretensions on the project of a union with the kingdom of Greece. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton had not been long enough in office to have become soaked in the ideas of routine. He did not regard the unanimous opinions of the insular legislature, municipalities, and press as evidence merely of the unutterable stupidity or the incurable ingratitude and wickedness of the Ionian populations. He thought the causes of the complaints and the dissatisfaction were well worth looking into, and he resolved on sending a statesman of distinction out to the islands to make the enquiry. Mr. Gladstone had been for some years out of office. He had been acting as an independent supporter of Lord Palmerston's Government. It occurred to Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton that Mr. Gladstone was the man best fitted to conduct the enquiry. He was well known to be a sympathiser with the struggles and the hopes of the Greeks generally; and it seemed to the new Colonial Secretary that the mere fact of such a man having been appointed would make it clear to the islanders that the enquiry was about to be conducted in no hostile spirit. He offered therefore to Mr. Gladstone the office of Lord High Commissioner Extraordinary to the Ionian Islands, and Mr. Gladstone accepted the offer and its duties. The appointment created much surprise, some anger, and a good deal of ridicule here at home. There seemed to certain minds to be something novel, startling, and positively unseemly in such a proceeding. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton had alluded in his despatch to Mr. Gladstone's Homeric scholarship, and this was, in the opinion of some politicians, an outrage upon all the principles and proprieties of routine. This, it was muttered, is what comes of literary men in office. A writer of novels is leader of the House of Commons, and he has another writer of novels at his side as Colonial Secretary, and between them they can think of nothing better than to send a man out to the Ionian Islands to listen to the trash of Greek demagogues, merely because he happens to be fond of reading Homer.

Mr. Gladstone went out to the Ionian Islands, and arrived in Corfu in the November of 1858. He called together the Senate, and endeavoured to

satisfy them as to the real nature of his mission. He explained that he had not come there to discuss the propriety of maintaining the English protectorate, but only to enquire into the manner in which the just claims of the Ionian Islands might be secured by means of that protectorate. Mr. Gladstone's visit, however, was not a successful enterprise for those who desired that the protectorate should be perpetual, and that the Ionians should be brought to accept it as inevitable. The population of the islands persisted in regarding him, not as the commissioner of a Conservative English Government, but as 'Gladstone the Philhellene.' He was received wherever he went with the honours due to a liberator. His path everywhere was made to seem like a triumphal progress. In vain he repeated his assurances that he came to reconcile the islands to the protectorate, and not to deliver them from it. The popular instinct insisted on regarding him as at least the precursor of their union to the kingdom of Greece. The National Assembly passed a formal resolution declaring for union with Greece. All that Mr. Gladstone's persuasions could do was to induce them to appoint a committee, and draw up a memorial to be presented in proper form to the protecting powers. By this time the news of Mr. Gladstone's reception in the islands, and in Athens, to which also he paid a visit, had reached England, and the most extravagant exaggerations were put into circulation. Mr. Gladstone was attacked in an absurd manner. He was accused not merely of having encouraged the pretensions of the Ionian Islanders, but even talked of as if he, and he alone, had been their inspiration. One might have imagined that there was something portentous and even unnatural in a population of Hellenic race feeling anxious to be united with a Greek kingdom instead of being ruled by a British protectorate imposed by the arbitrary decree of a congress of foreign powers. National complacency could hardly push sensible men to greater foolishness than it did when it set half England wondering and raging over the impertinence of a Greek population who preferred union with a Greek kingdom to dependence upon an English protectorate. English writers and speakers went on habitually as if the conduct of the islanders were on a par with that of some graceless daughter who forsakes her father's house for the companionship of strangers, or of some still more guilty wife who deserts her loving husband to associate herself with some strolling musician. There can be no doubt that in every material sense the people of the islands were much better governed under England's protectorate than they could be for generations, probably for centuries, to come under any Greek administration. They had admirable means of communication by land and sea, splendid harbours, regular lines of steamers, excellent roads everywhere, while the people of the kingdom of

Greece were hardly better off for all these advantages under Otho than they might have been under Codrus. M. Edmond About declared that the inhabitants of the Ionian Islands were richer, happier, and a hundred times better governed than the subjects of King Otho. M. About detested Greece and all about it; but his testimony thus far is that of the most enthusiastic Philhellene. Indeed it seems a waste of words to say, that where Englishmen ruled they would take care to have good roads and efficient lines of steamers. But M. About was mistaken in assuming that the populations of the islands were happier under British rule than they would have been under that of a Greek kingdom. Such a remark only showed a want of the dramatic sympathy which understands the feelings of others, and which we especially look for in a writer of any sort of fiction. M. About would not have been so successful a romancist if he had always acted on the assumption that people are made happy by the material conditions which, in the opinion of other people, ought to confer happiness. He would not, we may presume, admit that the people of Alsace and Lorraine are happier under the Germans than they were under the French, even though it were to be proved beyond dispute that the Germans made better roads and managed more satisfactorily the lines of railway.

The populations of the islands persevered in the belief that they understood better what made them happy than M. About could do. The visit of Mr. Gladstone, whatever purpose it may have been intended to fulfil, had the effect of making them agitate more strenuously than ever for annexation to the kingdom of Greece. Their wish, however, was not to be granted yet. A new Lord High Commissioner was sent out after Mr. Gladstone's return, doubtless with instructions to satisfy what was supposed to be public opinion at home by a little additional stringency in maintaining the connexion between Great Britain and the protected populations. Still, however, the idea held ground that sooner or later Great Britain would give up the charge of the islands. A few years after an opportunity occurred for making the cession. The Greeks got rid quietly of their heavy German king Otho, and on the advice chiefly of England they elected as sovereign a brother of the Princess of Wales. The Greeks themselves were not very eager for any other experiment in the matter of royalty. They seemed as if they thought they had had enough of it. But the Great Powers, and more especially England, pressed upon them that they could never be really respectable if they went without a king; and they submitted to the dictates of conventionality. They first asked for Prince Alfred of England, now Duke of Edinburgh; but the arrangements of European diplomacy did not allow of a prince of any

of the great reigning houses being set over Greece. In any case, nothing can be less likely than that an English Prince would have accepted such a responsibility. The French Government made some significant remark, to the effect that if it were possible for any of the Great Powers to allow one of their princes to accept the Greek crown, France had a prince disengaged, who she thought might have at least as good a claim as another. This was understood to be Prince Napoleon, son of Jerome, King of Westphalia, a prince of whom a good deal was heard after, as a good deal had been heard before, in the politics of Europe. The suggestion then about the prince of the House of Denmark was made either by or to the Greeks, and it was accepted. The second son of the King of Denmark was made King of Greece; and Lord John Russell, on behalf of the English Government, then handed over to the kingdom of Greece the islands of which Great Britain had had so long to bear the unwilling charge, and the retention of which, according to some uneasy politicians, was absolutely necessary alike to the national safety and the imperial glory of England. This is anticipating by a few years the movement of time; but the effects of Mr. Gladstone's visit so distinctly foreshadowed the inevitable result that it is not worth while dividing into two parts this little chapter of our history. Mr. Gladstone's visit, the mistaken interpretation put upon it by the islanders, and the reception which chiefly on account of that mistake he had among them, must have made it clear to every intelligent person in England that this country could not long continue to force her protectorate upon a reluctant population over whom it could not even claim the right of conquest. It ought to have been plain to all the world that England could not long consent, with any regard for her own professions and principles, to play the part of Europe's gaoler or man in possession. The cession of the Ionian Islands marked, however, the farthest point of progress attained for many years in that liberal principle of foreign policy which recognises fairness and justice as motives of action more imperative than national vanity, or the imperial pride of extended possession. England had to suffer for some time under the influence of a reaction which the cession of the islands, all just and prudent though it was, unquestionably helped to bring about.

CHAPTER XL.

THE TORY DIOGENES ROLLING HIS TUB.

THERE was once, we read, a mighty preparation for war going on in Athens. Everybody was busy in arrangement of some kind to meet the needs of coming battle. Diogenes had nothing in particular to do, but was unwilling to appear absolutely idle when all else were so busy. He set to work, therefore, with immense clatter and energy to roll his tub up and down the streets of Athens. The Conservative Government, seeing Europe all in disturbance and having nothing very particular to do, began to roll a tub of their own, and to show a preternatural and wholly unnecessary activity in doing so.

The year 1859 was one of storm and stress on the European continent. The war-drum throbbed through the whole of it. The year began with the memorable declaration of the Emperor of the French to the Austrian Ambassador at the Tuileries that the relations between the two Empires were not such as he could desire. This he said, according to the description given of the event in a despatch from Lord Cowley, 'with some severity of tone.' In truth, Count Cavour had had his way. He had prevailed upon Louis Napoleon, and the result was a determination to expel the Austrians from Italy. It seems clear enough that the Emperor, after a while, grew anxiously inclined to draw back from the position in which he had placed himself. Great pressure was brought to bear upon him by the English Government, and by other Governments as well, to induce him to refrain from disturbing the peace of Europe. He was probably quite sincere in the assurances he repeatedly gave that he was doing his best to prevent a rupture with Austria; and he would possibly have given much to avoid the quarrel. The turn of his mind was such that he scarcely ever formed any resolution or entered into any agreement but the moment the step was taken he began to see reasons for wishing that he had followed a different course. In this instance it is evident that he started at the sound himself had made. It was not, however, any longer in his power to guide events. He was in the hands of a stronger will and a more daring spirit than his own. In the career of Count Cavour our times have seen perhaps the most remarkable illustration of that great Italian statesmanship which has always appeared at intervals in the history of Europe. There may be very different opinions about the political morality of Cavour. Rather, indeed, may it be said that his strongest admirer is forced to invent a morality of his own, in order to justify all the political actions of a

man who knew no fear, hesitation, or scruple. Cavour had the head of a Machiavelli, the daring of a Cæsar Borgia, the political craft and audacity of a Richelieu. He was undoubtedly a patriot and a lover of his country; but he was willing to serve his country by means from which the conscience of modern Europe, even as it shows itself in the business of statesmanship, is forced to shrink back. If ends were to justify means, then the history of united Italy may be the justification of the life of Cavour; but until ends are held to justify means one can only say that he did marvellous things; that he broke up and reconstructed political systems; that he made a nation; that he realised the dreams of Dante, and some of the schemes of Alexander VI.; and that he accomplished all this for the most part at the cost of other people and not of Italians. Louis Napoleon was simply a weapon in the hands of such a man. Cavour knew precisely what he wanted, and was prepared to go all lengths and to run all risks to have it. When once the French Emperor had entered into a compact with him there was no escape from it.

Cavour did not look like an Italian; at least a typical Italian. He looked more like an Englishman. He reminded Englishmen oddly of Dickens's Pickwick, with his large forehead, his general look of moony good-nature, and his spectacles. That commonplace homely exterior concealed unsurpassed force of character, subtlety of scheming, and power of will. Cavour was determined that France should fight Austria. If Louis Napoleon had shown any decided inclination to draw back, Cavour would have flung Piedmont single-handed into the fight, and defied France, after what had passed, to leave her to her fate. Louis Napoleon dared not leave Piedmont to her fate. He had gone too far with Cavour for that. The war between France and Austria broke out. It was over, one might say, in a moment. Austria had no generals; the French army rushed to success; and then Louis Napoleon stopped short as suddenly as he had begun. He had proclaimed that he went to war to set Italy free from the Alps to the sea; but he made peace on the basis of the liberation of Lombardy from Austrian rule, and he left Venetia for another day and for other arms. He drew back before the very serious danger that threatened on the part of the German States, who showed ominous indications of a resolve to make the cause of Austria their own if France went too far. He held his hand from Venetia because of Prussia; seven years later Prussia herself gave Venetia to Italy.

The English Government had made futile attempts to prevent the outbreak of war. Lord Malmesbury had elaborated quires of heavy commonplace in the vain hope that the great conflicting forces then let loose could be brought back into quietude by the gentle charm of plenteous platitude.

Meanwhile, the Conservative Government could not exactly live on the mere reputation of having given good advice abroad to which no one would listen. They had to do something more at home. They began to roll a tub. While Europe was aflame with war-passion and panic, the Conservatives determined to try their hand at a Reform Bill. Mr. Disraeli, as leader of the House of Commons, knew that a Reform Bill was one of the certainties of the future. It suited him well enough to praise the perfection of existing institutions in his Parliamentary and platform speeches; but no one knew better than he that the Reform Bill of 1832 had left some blanks that must be, one day or another, filled up by some Government. Lord John Russell had made an attempt more than once and failed. He had tried a Reform Bill in 1852, and lost his chance because of the defeat of the Ministry on the Militia Bill; he had tried another experiment in 1854, but the country was too eager about war with Russia to care for domestic reform, and Lord John Russell had to abandon the attempt, not without an emotion which he could not succeed in concealing. Mr. Disraeli knew well enough that whenever Lord John Russell happened to be in power again he would return to his first love in politics, a Reform Bill. He knew also that a refusal to have anything to do with reform would always expose the Tories in office to a coalition of all the Liberal fractions against them. At present he could not pretend to think that his party was strong. The Conservatives were in office, but they were not in power. At any moment, if the Liberals chose, a motion calling for reform, or censuring the Government because they were doing nothing for reform, might be brought forward in the House of Commons and carried in the teeth of the Tory party. Mr. Disraeli had to choose between two dangers. He might risk all by refusing reform; he might risk all by attempting reform. He thought on the whole the wiser course would be to endeavour to take possession of the reform question for himself and his party.

The reappearance of Mr. Bright in politics stimulated no doubt this resolve on the part of the Conservative leader. We speak only of the one leader; for it is not likely that the Prime Minister, Lord Derby, took any active interest in the matter. Lord Derby had outlived political ambition, or he had had perhaps all the political success he cared for. There was not much to tempt him into a new reform campaign. Times had changed since his fiery energy went so far to stimulate the Whigs of that day into enthusiasm for the Bill of Lord Grey. Lord Derby had had nearly all in life that such a man could desire. He had station of the highest; he had wealth and influence; he had fame as a great Parliamentary debater. Now that Brougham had ceased to take any leading part in debate, he had no rival in the House of Lords. He had an easy buoyant temperament;

he was, as we have said already, something of a scholar, and he loved the society of his Homer and his Horace, while he could enjoy out-door amusements as well as any Squire Western or Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone of them all. He was a sincere man without any pretence; and, if he did not himself care about reform, he was not likely to put on any appearance of enthusiasm about it. Nor did he set much store on continuing in office. He would be the same Lord Derby out of office as in. It is probable, therefore, that he would have allowed reform to go its way for him and never troubled; and if loss of office came of his indifference, he would have gone out of office with unabated cheerfulness. But this way of looking at things was by no means suitable to his energetic and ambitious lieutenant. Mr. Disraeli had not nearly attained the height of his ambition, nor had he by any means exhausted his political energies. Mr. Disraeli, therefore, was not a man to view with any satisfaction the consequences likely to come to the Conservative party from an open refusal to take up the cause of reform. He had always, too, measured fairly and accurately the popular influence and the Parliamentary strength of Mr. Bright. It is clear that, at a time when most of the Conservatives, and not a few of the Whigs, regarded Mr. Bright as only an eloquent and respectable demagogue, Mr. Disraeli had made up his mind that the Manchester orator was a man of genius and foresight, who must be taken account of as a genuine political power. Mr. Bright now returned to public life. He had for a long time been withdrawn by ill-health from all share in political agitation, or politics of any kind. At one time it was indeed fully believed that the House of Commons had seen the last of him. To many his return to Parliament and the platform seemed almost like a resurrection. Almost immediately on his returning to public life he flung himself into a new agitation for reform. He addressed great meetings in the north of England and in Scotland, and he was induced to draw up a Reform Bill of his own. His scheme was talked of at that time by some of his opponents as though it were a project of which Jack Cade might have approved. It was practically a proposal to establish a franchise precisely like that which we have now, ballot and all, only that it threw the expenses of the returning officer on the county or borough rate, and it introduced a somewhat large measure of redistribution of seats. The opponents of reform were heard everywhere assuring themselves and their friends that the country in general cared nothing about reform. Mr. Bright himself was accredited with having said that his own effort to arouse a reforming spirit even in the North was like flogging a dead horse. But Mr. Disraeli was far too shrewd to be satisfied with such consolations as his followers would thus have administered. He knew well enough that the upper and middle classes cared very little

about a new Reform Bill. They had had all the reform they wanted in 1832. But, so long as the Bill of 1832 remained unsupplemented, it was evident that any political party could appeal to the support of the working-classes throughout the country in favour of any movement which promised to accomplish that object. In short, Mr. Disraeli knew that reform had to come some time, and he was resolved to make his own game if he could.

This time, however, he was not successful. The difficulties in his way were too great. It would have been impossible for him to introduce such a Reform Bill as Mr. Bright would be likely to accept. His own party would not endure such a proposition. He could only go so far as to bring in some Bill which might possibly seem to reformers to be doing something for reform, and at the same time might be commended to Conservatives on the ground that it really did nothing for it. Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill was a curiosity. It offered a variety of little innovations which nobody wanted or could have cared about, and it left out of sight altogether the one reform which alone gave an excuse for any legislation. We have explained more than once that Lord Grey's Reform Bill admitted the middle-class to legislation but left the working-class out. What was now wanted was a measure to let the working-class in. Nobody seriously pretended that any other object than this was sought by those who called out for reform. Yet Mr. Disraeli's scheme made no more account of the working-class as a whole than if they already possessed the vote every man of them. It proposed to give a vote in boroughs to persons who had property to the amount of 10*l.* a year in the funds, Bank stock or East India stock; to persons who had 60*l.* in a Savings Bank; to persons receiving pensions in the naval, military, or civil service, amounting to 20*l.* a-year; to professional men, to graduates of universities, ministers of religion, and certain schoolmasters: in fact, to a great number of persons who either already had the franchise or could have it if they had any interest that way. The only proposition in the Bill not absolutely farcical and absurd was that which would have equalised the franchise in counties and in boroughs, making 10*l.* the limit in each alike. The English working-classes cried out for the franchise, and Mr. Disraeli proposed to answer the cry by giving the vote to graduates of universities, medical practitioners, and schoolmasters.

Yet we may judge of the difficulties Mr. Disraeli had to deal with by the reception which even this poor little measure met with from some of his own colleagues. Mr. Walpole and Mr. Henley resigned office rather than have anything to do with it. Mr. Henley was a specimen of the class who might have been described as fine old English gentlemen. He was shrewd, blunt, honest, and narrow; given to broad jokes and to arguments

flavoured with a sort of humour which reminded not very faintly of the drollery of Fielding's time. Mr. Walpole was a man of gentle bearing, not by any means a robust politician, nor liberally endowed with intellect or eloquence, but pure-minded and upright enough to satisfy the most exacting. Mr. Walpole wrote to Lord Derby a letter which had a certain simple dignity and pathos in it, to explain the reason for his resignation. He frankly said that the measure which the Cabinet were prepared to recommend was one which they should all of them have stoutly opposed if either Lord Palmerston or Lord John Russell had ventured to bring it forward. This seemed to Mr. Walpole reason enough for his declining to have anything to do with it. It did not appear to him honourable to support a measure because it had been taken up by one's own party, which the party would assuredly have denounced and opposed to the uttermost if it had been brought forward by the other side. Mr. Walpole's colleagues no doubt respected his scruples, but some probably regarded them with good-natured contempt. Such a man, it was clear, was not destined to make much of a way in politics. Public opinion admired Mr. Walpole and applauded his decision. Public opinion would have pronounced even more strongly in his favour had it known that at the time of his making this decision and withdrawing from a high official position Mr. Walpole was in circumstances which made the possession of a salary of the utmost importance to him. Had he even swallowed his scruples and held on a little longer, he would have become entitled to a pension. He did not appear to have hesitated a moment. He was a high-minded gentleman; he could very well bear to be poor; he could not bear to surrender his self-respect.

This resignation, however, so honourable to Mr. Walpole and to Mr. Henley, will serve to show how great were the difficulties which then stood in Mr. Disraeli's way. Probably Mr. Disraeli's own feelings were in favour of a liberally extended suffrage. It is not a very rash assumption to conjecture that he looked with contempt on the kind of reasoning which fancied that the safety of a State depends upon the narrowness of its franchise. But his Bill bore the character of a measure brought in with the object of trying to reconcile irreconcileable claims and principles. To be the author of something which should give the Government the credit with their opponents of being reformers at heart, and with their friends of being non-reformers at heart, was apparently the object of Mr. Disraeli. The attempt was a complete failure. It was vain to preach up the beauty of 'lateral extension' of the franchise as opposed to extension downwards. The country saw through the whole imposture at a glance. One of Mr. Disraeli's defects as a statesman has always been that he is

apt to be just a little too clever for the business he has in hand. This ingenious Reform Bill was a little too clever. More matter and less art would have served its turn. It was found out in a moment. Someone described its enfranchising clauses as 'fancy franchises;' Mr. Bright introduced the phrase to the House of Commons, and the clauses never recovered the epithet. The Savings Bank clause provoked immense ridicule. Suppose, it was asked, a man draws out a few pounds to get married, or to save his aged parent from starvation, or to help a friend out of difficulties, is it fair that he should be immediately disfranchised as a penalty for being loving and kindly? One does not want to make the electoral franchise a sort of Monthyon prize for the most meritorious of any class; but still is it reasonable that a man who is to have a vote as long as he hoards his little sum of money is to forfeit the vote the moment he does a kind or even a prudent thing? Even as a matter of mere prudence, it was very sensibly argued, is it not better that a man should do something else with his money than invest it in a Savings Bank, which is, after all, only a safer version of the traditional old stocking? It would be useless to go into any of the discussions which took place on this extraordinary Bill. It can hardly be said to have been considered seriously. It had to be got rid of somehow, and therefore Lord John Russell moved an amendment, declaring that no readjustment of the franchise would satisfy the House of Commons or the country which did not provide for a greater extension of the suffrage in cities and boroughs than was contemplated in the Government measure. Perhaps the most remarkable speech made during the debate was that of Mr. Gladstone, who, accepting neither the Bill nor the resolution, occupied himself chiefly with an appeal to Parliament and public opinion on behalf of small boroughs. The argument was ingenious. It pointed to the number of eminent men who had been enabled to begin public life very early by means of a nomination for some pocket-borough, or who, having quarrelled with the constituents of a city or county, might for a while have been exiled from Parliament if some pocket-borough, or rather pocket-borough's master, had not admitted them by that little postern-gate. The argument, however, went no further than to show that in a civilised country every anomaly, however absurd, may be turned to some good account. If, instead of creating small pocket-boroughs, the English constitutional system had conferred on a few great peers the privilege of nominating members of Parliament directly by their own authority, this arrangement would undoubtedly work well in some cases. Beyond all question some of these privileged peers would send into Parliament deserving men who otherwise might be temporarily excluded from it. The same thing would sometimes happen no doubt if they made

over the nomination to their wives or their wives' waiting-women. But the system of pocket-boroughs, taken as a whole, was stuffed with injustice and corruption. It worked direct evil in twenty cases for every one case in which it brought about indirect good. The purchase of seats in the Parliament of Paris undoubtedly did good in some cases. Some of the men for whom seats were bought proved themselves useful and impartial members of that curious tribunal.

Lord John Russell's resolution was carried by a majority of 330 against 291, or a majority of 39. The Government dissolved Parliament, and appealed to the country. The elections did not excite very much public interest. They took place during the most critical moments of the war between France and Austria. While such news was arriving as that of the defeat of Magenta, the defeat of Solferino, the entrance of the Emperor of the French and the King of Sardinia into Milan, it was not likely that domestic news of a purely Parliamentary interest could occupy all the attention of Englishmen. It was not merely a great foreign war that the people of these islands looked on with such absorbing interest. It was what seemed to be the birth of a new era for Europe. There were some who felt inclined to echo the celebrated saying of Pitt after Austerlitz, and declare that we might as well roll up the map of Europe. In the victories of the French many saw the first indications of the manifest destiny of the heir of Waterloo, the man who represented a defeat. To many the strength of the Austrian military system had seemed the great bulwark of Conservatism in Europe; and now that was gone, shrivelled like a straw in fire, shattered like a potsherd. Surprise, bewilderment, rather than partisan passion of any kind, predominated over England. In such a condition of things the general election passed over hardly noticed. When it was over, it was found that the Conservatives had gained indeed, but had not gained nearly enough to enable them to hold office, unless by the toleration of their rivals. The rivals soon made up their minds that they had tolerated them long enough. A meeting of the Liberal party was held at Willis's Rooms, once the scene of Almack's famous assemblies. There the chiefs of the Liberal party met to adjust their several disputes, and to arrange on some plan of united action. Lord Palmerston represented one section of the party, Lord John Russell another. Mr. Sidney Herbert spoke for the Peelites. Not a few persons were surprised to find Mr. Bright among the speakers. It was well known that he liked Lord Palmerston little; that it could hardly be said he liked the Tories any less. But Mr. Bright was for a Reform Bill, from whomsoever it should come; and he thought, perhaps, that the Liberal chiefs had learned a

lesson. The party contrived to agree upon a principle of action, and a compact was entered into, the effect of which was soon made clear at the meeting of the new Parliament. A vote of want of confidence was at once moved by the Marquis of Hartington, eldest son of the Duke of Devonshire, and even then marked out by common report as a future leader of the Liberal party. Lord Hartington had sat but a short time in the House of Commons, and had thus far given no indications of any eloquence, or even of any taste for politics. Nothing could more effectively illustrate one of the peculiarities of the English political system than the choice of the Marquis of Hartington as the figurehead of this important movement against the Tory Government. Lord Hartington did not then, nor for many years afterwards, show any greater capacity for politics than is shown by an ordinary county member. He seemed rather below than above the average of the House of Commons. As leader subsequently of the Liberal party in that House, he can hardly be said to have shown as yet any higher qualities than a strong good sense and a manly firmness of purpose, combined with such skill in debate as constant practice under the most favourable circumstances must give to any man not absolutely devoid of all capacity for self-improvement. But even of the moderate abilities which Lord Hartington proved that he possessed in the Conservative Parliament of 1874, he had given no indication in 1859. He was put up to move the vote of want of confidence as the heir of the great Whig house of Devonshire; his appearance in the debate would have carried just as much significance with it if he had simply moved his resolution without an accompanying word. The debate that followed was long and bitter. It was enlivened by more than even the usual amount of personalities. Mr. Disraeli and Sir James Graham had a sharp passage of arms, in the course of which Sir James Graham used an expression that has been often quoted since. He described Mr. Disraeli as 'the Red Indian of debate,' who 'by the use of the tomahawk had cut his way to power, and by recurrence to the scalping system hopes to prevent the loss of it.' The scalping system, however, did not succeed this time. The division, when it came on after three nights of discussion, showed a majority of 13 in favour of Lord Hartington's motion. The result surprised no one. Everybody knew that the moment the various sections of the Liberal party contrived a combination the fate of the Ministry was sealed. Willis's Rooms had anticipated the decision of St. Stephen's. Rather, perhaps, might it be said that St. Stephen's had only recorded the decision of Willis's Rooms.

The Queen invited Lord Granville to form a Ministry. Lord Granville was still a young man to be Prime Minister, considering how much

the habits of Parliamentary life had changed since the days of Pitt. He was not much over forty years of age. He had filled many ministerial offices, however, and had an experience of Parliament which may be said to have begun with his majority. After some nine years spent in the House of Commons, the death of his father called him, in 1846, to the House of Lords. He made no assumption of commanding abilities, nor had he any pretence to the higher class of eloquence or statesmanship. But he was a thorough man of the world and of Parliament; he understood English ways of feeling and of acting; he was a clever debater, and had the genial art—very useful and very rare in English public life—of keeping even antagonists in good humour. Probably a better man could not have been found to suit all parties as Prime Minister of England, in times when there was no particular stress or strain to try the energies and the patience of the country. Still there was some surprise felt that the Queen should have passed over two men of years and of fame like Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, and have invited a much younger man at such a moment to undertake for the first time to form a Ministry. An explanation was soon given on the part of the Queen, or at least with her consent. The Queen had naturally thought, in the first instance, of Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell; but she found it 'a very invidious and unwelcome task' to make a choice between 'two statesmen so full of years and honours, and possessing so just a claim on her consideration.' Her Majesty, therefore, thought a compromise might best be got at between the more Conservative section of the Liberal party, which Lord Palmerston appeared to represent, and the more popular section led by Lord John Russell, if both could be united under the guidance of Lord Granville, the acknowledged leader of the Liberal party in the House of Lords. The attempt was not successful. Lord John Russell declined to serve under Lord Granville, but declared himself perfectly willing to serve under Lord Palmerston. This declaration at once put an end to Lord Granville's chances and to the whole difficulty which had been anticipated. There had been a coldness for some time between Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell. The two men were undoubtedly rivals; at least all the world persisted in regarding them in such a light. It was not thought possible that Lord John Russell would submit to take office under Lord Palmerston. On this occasion, however, as upon others, Lord John Russell showed a spirit of self-abnegation for which the public in general did not give him credit. The difficulty was settled to the satisfaction of everyone, Lord Granville included. Lord Granville was not in the slightest degree impatient to become Prime Minister, and indeed probably felt relieved from a very unwelcome re-

sponsibility when he was allowed to accept office under the premiership of Lord Palmerston. Lord Palmerston was now Prime Minister for life. Until his death he held the office with the full approval of Conservatives as well as Liberals; nay, indeed, with much warmer approbation from the majority of the Conservatives than from many of the Liberals.

Palmerston formed a strong Ministry. Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord John Russell had the office of Foreign Secretary; Sir G. C. Lewis was Home Secretary; Mr. Sidney Herbert Minister for War. The Duke of Newcastle took charge of the Colonies, Mr. Cardwell accepted the Irish Secretaryship, and Sir Charles Wood was Secretary for India. Lord Palmerston endeavoured to propitiate the Manchester Liberals by offering a seat in the Government to Mr. Cobden and to Mr. Milner Gibson. Mr. Cobden was at the time on his way home from the United States. In his absence he had been elected member for Rochdale; and in his absence, too, the office of President of the Board of Trade in the New Ministry had been put at his disposal. His friends eagerly awaited his return, and, when the steamer bringing him home was near Liverpool, a number of them went out to meet him before his landing. They boarded the steamer, and astonished him with the news that the Tories were out, that the Liberals were in, that he was member for Rochdale, and that Lord Palmerston had offered him a place in the new Ministry. Cobden took the news which related to himself with his usual quiet modesty. He declined to say anything about the offer he had received from Lord Palmerston until he should have the opportunity of giving his answer directly to Lord Palmerston himself. This, of course, was only a necessary courtesy, and most of Cobden's friends were of opinion that he ought to accept Lord Palmerston's offer. Cobden explained afterwards that the office put at his disposal was exactly that which would have best suited him, and in which he thought that he could do some good. He also declared frankly that the salary attached to the office would be a consideration of much importance to him. Mr. Cobden's friends were well aware that he had invested the greater part of his property in American railways, which just then were not very profitable investments, although in the long run they justified his confidence in their success. At the moment he was a poor man. Yet he did not in his own mind hesitate a moment about Lord Palmerston's offer. He disapproved of Palmerston's foreign policy, of his military expenditure, and his love of interfering in the disputes of the Continent; and he felt that he could not conscientiously accept office under such a leader. He refused the offer decisively, and the chief promoter of the repeal of the Corn Laws never held any place in an English Administration. Cobden, however,

advised his friend, Mr. Milner Gibson, to avail himself of Lord Palmerston's offer, and Mr. Gibson acted on the advice. The opinions of Mr. Cobden and Mr. Gibson were the same on most subjects, but Mr. Gibson had never stood out before the country in so conspicuous a position as an opponent of Lord Palmerston. Perhaps Cobden's advice was given in the spirit of Dr. Parr, who encouraged a modest friend to adopt the ordinary pronunciation of the Egyptian city's name. 'Dr. Bentley and I, sir, must call it Alexandrīa; but I think you may call it Alexandrĭa.'

Mr. Cobden felt really grateful to Lord Palmerston for his offer, and for his manner of making it. 'I had no personal feeling whatever,' he said to his constituents at Rochdale, 'in the course I took with regard to Lord Palmerston's offer. If I had had any feeling of personal hostility, which I never had towards him, for he is of that happy nature which cannot create a personal enemy, his kind and manly offer would have instantly disarmed me.' Lord Palmerston had not made any tender of office to Mr. Bright; and he wrote to Mr. Bright frankly explaining his reasons. Mr. Bright had been speaking out too strongly during his recent reform campaign to make his presence in the Cabinet acceptable to some of the Whig magnates for whom seats had to be found. It is curious to notice now the conviction, which at that time seemed to be universal, that Mr. Cobden was a much more moderate reformer than Mr. Bright. The impression was altogether wrong. There was in Mr. Bright's nature a certain element of Conservatism which showed itself clearly enough the moment the particular reforms which he thought necessary were carried; Mr. Cobden would have gone on advancing in the direction of reform as long as he lived. It was Mr. Cobden's conciliatory manner, and an easy genuine *bonhomie*, worthy of Palmerston himself, that made the difference between the two men in popular estimation. Not much difference, to be sure, was ever to be noticed between them in public affairs. Only once had they voted in opposite lobbies of the House of Commons, and that was, if we are not mistaken, on the Maynooth grant; and Mr. Bright afterwards adopted the views of Mr. Cobden. But where there was any difference, even of speculative opinion, Mr. Cobden went further than Mr. Bright along the path of Radicalism. Mr. Cobden's sweet temper and good-humoured disposition made it hard for him to express strong opinions in tones of anger. It is doubtful whether a man of his temperament ever could be a really great orator. Indignation is even more effective as an element in the making of great speeches than in the making of small verses.

The closing days of the year were made memorable by the death of Macaulay. He had been raised to the peerage, and had had some hopes

of being able to take occasional part in the stately debates of the House of Lords. But his health almost suddenly broke down, and his voice was never heard in the Upper Chamber. He died prematurely, having only entered on his sixtieth year. We have already studied the literary character of this most successful literary man. Macaulay had had, as he often said himself, a singularly happy life, although it was not without its severe losses and its griefs. His career was one of uninterrupted success. His books brought him fame, influence, social position, and wealth, all at once. He never made a failure. The world only applauded one book more than the other, the second speech more than the first. Macaulay the essayist, Macaulay the historian, Macaulay the ballad-writer, Macaulay the Parliamentary orator, Macaulay the brilliant inexhaustible talker—he was alike, it might appear, supreme in everything he chose to do or to attempt. After his death there came a natural reaction; and the reaction, as is always the case, was inclined to go too far. People began to find out that Macaulay had done too many things; that he did not do anything as it might have been done; that he was too brilliant; that he was only brilliant; that he was not really brilliant at all, but only superficial and showy. The disparagement was more unjust by far than even the extravagant estimate. Macaulay was not the paragon, the ninth wonder of the world, for which people once set him down; but he was undoubtedly a great literary man. He was also a man of singularly noble character. He was, in a literary sense, egotistic; that is to say, he thought and talked and wrote a great deal about his works and himself; but he was one of the most unselfish men that ever lived. He appears to have enjoyed advancement, success, fame, and money only because these enabled him to give pleasure and support to the members of his family. He was attached to his family, especially to his sisters, with the tenderest affection. His real nature seems only to have thoroughly shone out when in their society. There he was loving, sportive even to joyous frolicsomeness; a glad schoolboy almost to the very end. He was remarkably generous and charitable, even to strangers; his hand was almost always open; but he gave so unostentatiously that it was not until after his death half his kindly deeds became known. He had a spirit which was absolutely above any of the corrupting temptations of money and rank. He was very poor at one time; and during his poverty he was beginning to make his reputation in the House of Commons. It is often said that a poor man feels nowhere so much out of place, nowhere so much at a disadvantage, nowhere so much humiliated, as in the house of Commons. Macaulay felt nothing of the kind. He bore himself as easily and steadfastly as though he had been the eldest son of a proud and wealthy

family. It did not seem to have occurred to him when he was poor that money was lacking to the dignity of his intellect and his manhood; or when he was rich that money added to it. Certain defects of temper and manner, rather than of character, he had which caused men often to misunderstand him, and sometimes to dislike him. He was apt to be overbearing in tone, and to show himself a little too confident of his splendid gifts and acquirements: his marvellous memory, his varied reading, his overwhelming power of argument. He trampled on men's prejudices too heedlessly, was inclined to treat ignorance as if it were a crime, and to make dulness feel that it had cause to be ashamed of itself. Such defects as these are hardly worth mentioning, and would not be mentioned here, but that they serve to explain some of the misconceptions which were formed of Macaulay by many during his lifetime, and some of the antagonisms which he unconsciously created. Absolutely without literary affectation, undepressed by early poverty, unspoiled by later and almost unequalled success, he was an independent, quiet, self-relying man who, in all his noon of fame, found most happiness in the companionship and the sympathy of those he loved; and who, from first to last, was loved most tenderly by those who knew him best. He was buried in Westminster Abbey in the first week of the new year, and there truly took his place among his peers.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE FRENCH TREATY AND THE PAPER DUTIES.

Lord Palmerston's Ministry came into power in troublous times. All over the world there seemed to be an upheaving of old systems. Since 1848 there had not been such a period of political and social commotion. A new war had broken out in China. The peace of Villafranca had only patched up the Italian system. Everyone saw that there was much convulsion to come yet before Italy was likely to settle down into order. From across the Atlantic came the first murmurings of civil war. John Brown had made his famous raid into Harper's Ferry, a town on the borders of Virginia and Maryland, for the purpose of helping slaves to escape, and he was captured, tried for the attempt, and executed. He met his death with the composure of an antique hero. Victor Hugo declared in one of his most impassioned sentences, that the gibbet of John Brown was the Calvary of the anti-slavery movement; and assuredly the execution of the brave old man was the death sentence of slavery.

Abraham Lincoln had just been adopted by the National Republican Convention at Chicago as candidate for the Presidency, and even here in England people were beginning to understand what that meant. At home there were distractions of other kinds. Some of the greatest strikes ever known in England had just broken out; and a political panic was further perplexed by the quarrels of class with class. A profound distrust of Louis Napoleon prevailed almost everywhere. The fact that he had been recently our ally did not do much to diminish this distrust. On the contrary, it helped in a certain sense to increase it. Against what State, it was asked, did he enter into alliance with us? Against Russia. To defend Turkey? Not at all; Louis Napoleon always acknowledged that he despised the Turks and felt sure nothing could ever be made of them. It was to have his revenge for Moscow and the Beresina, people said, that he struck at Russia; and he made us his mere tools in the enterprise. Now he turns upon Austria, to make her atone for other wrongs done against the ambition of the Bonapartes; and he has conquered. Austria, believed by all men to have the greatest military organisation in Europe, lies crushed at his feet. What next? Prussia perhaps—or England? The official classes in this country had from the first been in sympathy with Austria, and would, if they could, have had England take up her quarrel. The Tories were Austrian for the most part. Not much of the feeling for Italy which was afterwards so enthusiastic and effusive had yet sprung up in England among the Liberals and the bulk of the population. People did not admit that it was an affair of Italy at all; they saw in it rather an evidence of the ambition of Piedmont. When, soon after the close of the short war, it became known that Sardinia was to pay for the alliance of France by the surrender of Nice and Savoy, the indignation in this country became irrepressible. The whole thing seemed a base transaction. The House of Savoy, said an indignant orator in Parliament, had sprung from the womb of those mountains; its connection with them should be as eternal as the endurance of the mountains themselves. Men saw in the conduct of Louis Napoleon only an evidence of the most ignoble rapacity. It is of no use, they said, talking of alliances and cordial understandings with such a man. There is in him no faith and no scruple. *Cras mihi.* To-morrow he will try to humble and to punish England as he has already humbled and punished Austria; his alliance with us will prove to be of as much account as did his alliance with Sardinia. He did not scruple to wring territory from the confederate whose devoted friend and patron he professed to be; what should we have to expect, we against whom he cherishes up a national and a family hatred, if by any chance he should be enabled to strike us a sudden blow?

The feeling therefore in England was almost entirely one of revived dread and distrust of Louis Napoleon. There was a good deal to be said for his bargain about Savoy and Nice by those who were anxious to defend it. But, taken as a whole, it was a singularly unfortunate transaction. It turned back the attention of conquerors to that old-fashioned plan of partition which sanguine people were beginning to hope was gone out of European politics, like the sacking of towns and the holding of princes to ransom. It is likely that Louis Napoleon thought of this himself somewhat bitterly later on in his career, when the Germans adopted his own principle, although, as they themselves pleaded, with somewhat better excuse: for they only extorted territory from an enemy; he extorted it from a friend. There could be no pretence that it was other than an act of extortion. Even the Piedmontese statesmen who conducted the transaction—Cavour cleverly dodged out of it himself—did not venture to profess that they were doing it willingly. It had to be done. Perhaps it had to be done by Louis Napoleon as well as by Victor Emanuel. Cavour had compelled the Emperor of the French to make a stand for Italy; but the Emperor could hardly face his own people without telling them that France was to have something for her money and her blood. Wars for an idea generally end like this. On the whole, however, let it be owned that the Italians had made a good bargain. Savoy and Nice were provinces of which the Italian nationality was very doubtful; of which the Italian sentiment was perhaps more doubtful still. Louis Napoleon had the worst of the bargain in that as in most other transactions wherein he thought he was doing a clever thing. He went very near estranging altogether the friendly feeling of the English people from him and from France. The invasion panic sprang up again here in a moment. The volunteer forces began to increase in numbers and in ardour. Plans of coast fortification and of national defences generally were thrust upon Parliament from various quarters. A feverish anxiety about the security of the island took possession of many minds that were usually tranquil and shrewd enough. It really seemed as if the country was looking out for what Mr. Disraeli called, a short time afterwards, when he was not in office and was therefore not responsible to public clamour for the defence of our coasts, 'a midnight foray from our imperial ally.' The venerable Lord Lyndhurst took on himself in especial the task of rousing the nation. With a vigour of manner and a literary freshness of style well worthy of his earlier and best years, he devoted himself to the work of inflaming the public spirit of England against Louis Napoleon; a graceful and acrid lawyer Demosthenes denouncing a Philip of the *Opéra-Comique*. 'If I am asked,'

said Lyndhurst, 'whether I cannot place reliance upon the Emperor Napoleon, I reply with confidence that I cannot, because he is in a situation in which he cannot place reliance upon himself.' 'If the calamity should come,' he asked, 'if the conflagration should take place, what words can describe the extent of the calamity, or what imagination can paint the overwhelming ruin that would fall upon us?' The most harmless and even reasonable actions on the part of France were made a ground of suspicion and alarm by some agitated critics. A great London newspaper saw strong reason for uneasiness, in the fact that 'at this moment the French Government is pushing with extraordinary zeal the suspicious project of the impracticable Suez Canal.'

We have already remarked upon the fact that up to this time there was no evidence in the public opinion of England of any sympathy with Italian independence such as became the fashion a year later. At least if there was any such sympathy here and there, it did not to any perceptible degree modify the distrust which was felt towards the Emperor Napoleon. Mrs. Barrett-Browning's passionate praises of the Emperor and lamentations for the failure of 'his great deed' were regarded as the harmless and gushing sentimentalisms of a poet and a woman—indeed, a poet with many people seems a sort of woman. The King of Sardinia, Victor Emanuel, had visited England not long before, and had been received with public addresses and other such demonstrations of admiration here and there; but even his concrete presence had not succeeded in making impression enough to secure him the general sympathy of the English public. Some association in Edinburgh had had the singular bad taste to send him an address of welcome in which they congratulated him on his opposition to the Holy See, as if he were another Achilli or Gavazzi come over to denounce the Pope. The King's reply was measured out with a crushing calmness and dignity. It coldly reminded his Edinburgh admirers of the fact, which we may presume they had forgotten, that he was descended from a long line of Catholic princes, and was the sovereign of subjects almost entirely Catholic, and that he could not therefore accept with satisfaction 'words of reprobation injurious to the Head of the Church to which he belonged.' We only recall to memory this unpleasant little incident for the purpose of pointing a moral which it might of itself suggest. It is much to be feared that the popular enthusiasm for the unity and independence of Italy which afterwards flamed out in England was only enthusiasm against the Pope. Something no doubt was due to the brilliancy of Garibaldi's exploits in 1860, and to the romantic halo which at that time and for long after surrounded Garibaldi himself; but no Englishman who thinks coolly over the subject

will venture to deny that nine out of every ten enthusiasts for Italian liberty at that time were in favour of Italy because Italy was supposed to be in spiritual rebellion against the Pope.

The Ministry attempted great things. They undertook a complete remodelling of the customs system, a repeal of the paper duties, and a Reform Bill. The news that a commercial treaty with France was in preparation broke on the world somewhat abruptly in the early days of 1860. The arrangement was made in a manner to set old formalism everywhere shaking its solemn head and holding up its alarmed hands. The French treaty was made without any direct assistance from professional diplomacy. It was made, indeed, in despite of professional diplomacy. It was the result of private conversations and an informal agreement between the Emperor of the French and Mr. Cobden. The first idea of such an arrangement came, we believe, from Mr. Bright; but it was Mr. Cobden who undertook to see the Emperor Napoleon and exchange ideas with him on the subject. The Emperor of the French, to do him justice, was entirely above the conventional formalities of imperial dignity. He sometimes ran the risk of seeming undignified in the eyes of the vulgar by the disregard of all formality with which he was willing to allow himself to be approached. Although Mr. Cobden had never held official position of any kind in England, the Emperor received him very cordially and entered readily into his ideas on the subject of a treaty between England and France which should remove many of the prohibitions and restrictions then interfering with a liberal interchange of the productions of the two nations. Napoleon the Third was a Freetrader or something nearly approaching to it. His cousin, Prince Napoleon, was still more advanced and more decided in his views of political economy. The Emperor was, moreover, a good deal under the influence of Michael Chevalier, the distinguished French publicist and economist, who from having been a member of the Socialistic sect of the famous Père Enfantin, had come to be a practical politician and an economist of a very high order. Mr. Cobden had the assistance of all the influence Mr. Gladstone could bring to bear. It is not likely that Lord Palmerston cared much about the French treaty project, but at least he did not oppose it. Mr. Cobden was under the impression, and probably not without reason, that the officials of the English Embassy in Paris were rather inclined to thwart than to assist his efforts. But if such a feeling prevailed, it was perhaps less a dislike of the proposed arrangement between England and France than an objection to the informal and irregular way of bringing it about. Diplomacy has always been mechanical and conventional in its working, and the English diplo-

matic service has even among diplomatic services been conspicuous for its worship of routine.

There were many difficulties in the way on both sides. The French people were for the most part opposed to the principles of Free Trade. The French manufacturing bodies were almost all against it. Some of the most influential politicians of the country were uncompromising opponents of Free Trade. M. Thiers, for example, was an almost impassioned Protectionist. It may be admitted at once that if the Emperor of the French had had to submit the provisions of his treaty to the vote of an independent Legislative Assembly, he could not have secured its adoption. He had in fact to enter into the engagement by virtue of his Imperial will and power. On the other hand, a strong objection was felt in this country just then to any friendly negotiation or arrangement whatever with the Emperor. His schemes in Savoy and Nice had created so much dislike and distrust of him, that many people felt as if war between the two States were more likely to come than any sincere and friendly understanding on any subject. As soon as it became known that the treaty was in course of negotiation a storm of indignation broke out in this country. Most of the newspapers denounced the treaty as a mean arrangement with a man whose policy was only perfidious, and whose vows were as little to be trusted as dicers' oaths. Not only the Conservative party condemned and denounced the proposed agreement, but a large proportion of the Liberals were bitter against it. Some critics declared that Mr. Cobden had been simply taken in; that the French Emperor had 'bubbled' him. Others accused Mr. Cobden of having entered into a conspiracy with the Emperor to enable Louis Napoleon to 'jockey his own subjects'—such was the phrase adopted by one influential member of Parliament, the late Mr. Horsman, then a speaker with a certain gift of rattling metallic declamation. Others again declared that the compromise effected by the treaty was in itself a breach of the principle of Free Trade. It was observable that this argument usually came from lately converted or still unconverted Protectionists; just as the argument founded on the arbitrariness of the imperial action was most strenuously enforced by those who at home were least inclined to encourage the principle of government by the people. Thus Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, and even Mr. Gladstone found themselves in the odd position of having to repel the charge of renouncing Free Trade, and rejecting the principles of representative government. It is hardly necessary to defend the course taken by Mr. Cobden in accepting a compromise where he could not possibly obtain an absolutely free interchange of commodities. The most devoted champion of the freedom of religious worship is not to

be blamed if he enters into an agreement with some foreign Government to obtain for its nonconforming subjects a qualified degree of religious liberty. An opponent of capital punishment would not be held to have surrendered his principle because he endeavoured to reduce the number of capital sentences where he saw no hope of the immediate abolition of the death penalty. Nor do we see that there was anything inconsistent in Mr. Cobden's entering into an agreement with the Emperor of the French, even though that agreement was to be carried out in France by an arbitrary exertion of imperial will, such as would have been intolerable and impossible in England. To lay down a principle of this kind would be only to say that no statesman shall conclude an arrangement of any sort with the rulers of a State not so liberal as his own in its system of government. Of course no one ever thinks of arguing for such a principle in the regular diplomatic negotiations between States. Those who found fault with Mr. Cobden because he was willing to assent to an arrangement which the Emperor Napoleon imposed upon his subjects must have known that our official statesmen were every day entering into engagements with one or the other European sovereign which were to be carried out by that sovereign on the same arbitrary principle. There was in fact no soundness or sincerity in such objections to Mr. Cobden's work. Some men opposed it because they were Protectionists, pure and simple; some opposed it because they detested the Emperor Napoleon. The ground of objection with not a few was their dislike of Mr. Cobden and the Manchester School. The hostility of some came from their repugnance to seeing anything done out of the regular and conventional way. All these objections coalesced against the treaty and the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget; but the eloquence of Mr. Gladstone and the strength of the Government prevailed against them all.

The effect of the treaty, so far as France was concerned, was an engagement virtually to remove all prohibitory duties on all the staples of British manufacture, and to reduce the duties on English coal and coke, bar and pig iron, tools, machinery, yarns, flax, and hemp. England, for her part, proposed to sweep away all duties on manufactured goods, and to reduce greatly the duties on foreign wines. In one sense, of course, England gave more than she got, but that one sense is only the Protectionist's sense—more properly nonsense. England could not, with any due regard for the real meaning of words, be said to have given up anything when she enabled her people to buy light and excellent French wines at a cheap price. She could not be said to have sacrificed anything when she secured for her consumers the opportunity of buying French manufactured articles at a natural price. The whole principle of Free

Trade stamps as ridiculous the theory that because our neighbour foolishly cuts himself off from the easy purchase of the articles we have to sell, it is our business to cut ourselves off from the easy purchase of the articles he has to sell and we wish to buy. We gave France much more reduction of duty than we got; but the reduction was in every instance a direct benefit to our consumers. The introduction of light wines, for example, made, after a while, a very remarkable, and on the whole a very beneficial, change in the habits of our people. The heavier and more fiery drinks became almost disused by large classes of the population. The light wines of Bordeaux began to be familiar to almost every table; the portentous brandied ports, which carried gout in their very breath, were gradually banished. Some of the debates, however, on this particular part of the Budget recalled to memory the days of Colonel Sibthorp and his dread of the importation of foreign ways among our countrymen. Many prophetic voices declared in the House of Commons that with the greater use of French wines would come the rapid adoption of what were called French morals; that the maids and matrons of England would be led by the treaty to the drinking of claret, and from the drinking of claret to the ways of the French novelist's odious heroine, Madame Bovary. Appalling pictures were drawn of the orgies to go on in the shops of confectioners and pastrycooks who had a licence to sell the light wines. The virtue of Englishwomen, it was insisted, would never be able to stand this new and terrible mechanism of destruction. She who was far above the temptations of the public-house would be drawn easily into the more genteel allurements of the wine-selling confectioner's shop; and in every such shop would be the depraved conventional foreigner, the wretch with a moustache and without morals, lying in wait to accomplish at last his long-boasted conquests of the blonde misses of England. One impassioned speaker, glowing into a genuine prophetic fury as he spoke, warned his hearers of the near approach of a time when a man suddenly entering one of the accursed confectioners' shops, in quest of the missing female members of his family, would find his wife lying drunk in one room and his daughter disgraced in another.

In spite of all this, however, Mr. Gladstone succeeded in carrying this part of his Budget. He carried, too, as far as the House of Commons was concerned, his important measure for the abolition of the duty on paper. The duty on paper was the last remnant of an ancient system of finance which pressed severely on journalism. The stamp duty was originally imposed with the object of checking the growth of seditious newspapers. It was reduced, increased, reduced again, and increased again, until in the early part of the century it stood at fourpence on each copy of

a newspaper issued. In 1836 it was brought down to the penny, represented by the red stamp on every paper, which most of us can still remember. There was besides this a considerable duty—sixpence, or some such sum—on every advertisement in a newspaper. Finally, there was the heavy duty on the paper material itself. A journal, therefore, could not come into existence until it had made provision for all these factitious and unnecessary expenses. The consequence was that a newspaper was a costly thing. Its possession was the luxury of the rich; those who could afford less had to be content with an occasional read of a paper. It was common for a number of persons to club together and take in a paper, which they read by turns, the general understanding being that he whose turn came last remained in possession of the journal. It was considered the fair compensation for his late reception of the news that he should come into the full proprietorship of the precious newspaper. The price of a daily paper then was uniformly sixpence; and no sixpenny paper contained anything like the news, or went to a tenth of the daily expense, which is supplied in the one case and undertaken in the other by the penny papers of our day. Gradually the burthens on journalism and on the reading public were reduced. The advertisement duty was abolished; in 1855 the stamp duty was abolished; that is to say, the stamp was either removed altogether or was allowed to stand as postage. On the strength of this reform many new and cheap journals were started. Two of them in London, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Morning Star*, acquired influence and reputation. But the effect of the duty on the paper material still told heavily against cheap journalism. It became painfully evident that a newspaper could not be sold profitably for a penny while that duty remained, and therefore a powerful agitation was set on foot for its removal. The agitation was carried on, not on behalf of the interests of newspaper speculation, but on behalf of the reading public and of the education of the people. It is not necessary now to enter upon any argument to show that the publication of such a paper as the *Daily News* or the *Daily Telegraph* must be a matter of immense importance in popular education. But at that time there were still men who argued that newspaper literature could only be kept up to a proper level of instruction and decorum by being made factitiously costly. It was the creed of many that cheap newspapers meant the establishment of a daily propaganda of socialism, communism, red republicanism, blasphemy, bad spelling, and general immorality.

Mr. Gladstone undertook the congenial task of abolishing the duty on paper. He was met with strong opposition from both sides of the House. The paper manufacturers made it at once a question of protection to their own trade. They dreaded the competition of all manner of adventurous rivals under a free system. Many of the paper-manufacturers had been

staunch free-traders when it was a case of free trade to be applied to the manufactures of other people; but they cried out against having the ingredients of the unwelcome chalice commended to their own lips. Vested interests in the newspaper business itself also opposed Mr. Gladstone. The high-priced and well-established journals did not by any means relish the idea of cheap and unfettered competition. They therefore preached without reserve the doctrine that in journalism cheap meant nasty, and that the only way to keep the English press pure and wholesome was to continue the monopoly to their own publications. The House of Commons is a good deal governed, directly and indirectly, by 'interests.' It is influenced by them directly, as when the railway interest, the mining interest, the brewing interest, or the landed interest, boldly stands up, through its acknowledged representatives in Parliament, to fight for its own hand. It is also much influenced indirectly. Every powerful interest in the House can contrive to enlist the sympathies and get the support of men who have no direct concern one way or another in some proposed measure, who know nothing about it, and do not want to be troubled with any knowledge, and who are therefore easily led to see that the side on which some of their friends are arrayed must be the right side. There was a good deal of rallying up of such men to sustain the cause of the paper-making and journal-selling monopoly. The result was that although Mr. Gladstone carried his resolutions for the abolition of the excise on paper, he only carried them by dwindling majorities. The second reading was carried by a majority of 53; the third by a majority of only 9. The effect of this was to encourage some members of the House of Lords to attempt the task of getting rid of Mr. Gladstone's proposed reform altogether. An amendment to reject the resolutions repealing the tax was proposed by Lord Monteagle, and received the support of Lord Derby and of Lord Lyndhurst.

Lord Lyndhurst was then just entering on his eighty-ninth year. His growing infirmities made it necessary that a temporary railing should be constructed in front of his seat in order that he might lean on it and be supported. But although his physical strength thus needed support his speech gave no evidence of failing intellect. Even his voice could hardly be said to have lost any of its clear, light, musical strength. He entered into a long and a very telling argument to show that although the peers had abandoned their claim to alter a money bill, they had still a right to refuse their assent to a repeal of taxation, and that in this particular instance they were justified in doing so. There was not much perhaps in this latter part of the argument. Lord Lyndhurst fell back on some of his familiar alarms about the condition of Europe and the possible schemes of

Louis Napoleon, and out of these he extracted reasons for contending that we ought to maintain unimpaired the revenue of the country, to be ready to meet emergencies, and encounter unexpected liabilities. In an ordinary time not much attention would be paid to criticism of this kind. It would be regarded as the duty of the Finance Minister, the Government, and the House of Commons to see that the wants of the coming year were properly provided for in taxation; and when the Government and the House of Commons had once decided that a certain amount was sufficient, the House of Lords would hardly think that on it lay any responsibility for a formal revision of the Ministerial scheme. Some peer would in all probability make some such observations as those of Lord Lyndhurst; but they would be accepted as mere passing criticisms of the Ministerial scheme, and it would not occur to anyone to think of taking a division on the suggested amendment. In this instance the House of Lords was undoubtedly influenced by a dislike for the proposed measure of reduction, for the manner in which it had been introduced, for its ministerial author, or at least for his general policy, and for some of the measures by which it had been accompanied. It is not unlikely, for example, that Lord Lyndhurst himself felt something like resentment for the policy which answered all his eloquent warnings about the schemes of the Emperor Napoleon, by producing a treaty of commerce with the supposed invader of England. The repeal of the paper duty was known also to have the warm advocacy of Mr. Bright; and it was advocated by the *Morning Star*, a journal greatly influenced by Mr. Bright's opinions, and in which popular rumour said, very untruly, that Mr. Bright was a writer of frequent leading articles. Thus the repeal of the paper duty got to seem in the eyes of many peers a proposal connected somehow with the spread of Democracy, the support of the Manchester School, and the designs of Napoleon III.

The question which the House of Lords had to face was somewhat serious. The Commons had repealed a tax; was it constitutionally in the power of the House of Lords to reimpose it? Was not this, it was asked, simply to assert for the House of Lords a taxing power equal to that of the Commons? Was it not to reduce to nothing the principle that taxation and representation go together? Suppose, instead of re-enacting the paper duty, the House of Lords had thought fit to introduce into the new Budget a new and different tax, what was there to hinder them, on their own principle, from doing so? On the other hand, those who took Lord Lyndhurst's view of the question insisted that when the Budget scheme was laid before them for their approval, the House of Lords had as good a right constitutionally to reject as to accept any part

of it, and that to strike out a clause in a Budget was quite a different thing from taking the initiative in the imposition of taxation. It was contended that the House of Lords had not only a constitutional right to act as they were invited to do in the case of the paper duty, but that as a matter of fact they had often done so, and that the country had never challenged their authority. The Conservative party in the House of Lords can always carry any division, and in this instance it was well known that they could marshal a strong majority against Mr. Gladstone's proposed remission of taxation. But it was commonly expected that they would on this occasion, as they had done on many others, abstain from using their overpowering numerical strength; that prudent counsels would prevail in the end, and that the amendment would not be pressed to a division. The hope, however, was deceived. The House of Lords was in an unusually aggressive mood. The majority were resolved to show that they could do something. Mr. Disraeli in one of his novels had irreverently said of the Lords, that when the peers accomplish a division they cackle as if they had laid an egg. On this occasion they were determined to have a division. The majority against the Government was overwhelming. For the second reading of the Paper Duty Bill, 90 peers voted and there were 14 proxies; in all 104. For Lord Monteagle's amendment there were 161 votes of peers actually present and 32 proxies, or 193 in all. The majority against the Government was therefore 89; and the repeal of the excise duty on paper was done with for that session. The peers went home cackling; not a few of them, however, a little in doubt as to the wisdom of the course they had pursued, a little afraid to think on what they had done. The House of Lords had not taken any very active step in politics for some time, and many of them were uncertain as to the manner in which the country would regard their unwonted exertion of authority.

The country took it rather coolly on the whole. Lord Palmerston promptly came forward and moved in the House of Commons for a committee to ascertain and report on the practice of each House with regard to the several descriptions of Bills imposing or repealing taxes. By thus interposing at once he hoped to take the wind out of the sails of a popular agitation which he disliked and would gladly have avoided. The committee took two months to consider their report. They found, by a majority of fourteen, a series of resolutions to the effect that the privilege of the House of Commons did not extend so far as to make it actually unconstitutional for the Lords to reject a Bill for the repeal of a tax. Mr. Walpole was the chairman of the committee, and he drew up the report, which cited a considerable number of precedents in support of the

view adopted by the majority. Mr. Bright, who was a member of the committee, did not assent to this principle. He prepared a draft report of his own in which he contended for the very reasonable view, that if the Lords might prolong or reimpose a tax by refusing their assent to its repeal when that repeal had been voted by the House of Commons, the House of Commons could not have absolute control over the taxation of the country. It seems clear that, whatever may have been the technical right of the Lords, or however precedent may have occasionally appeared to justify the course which they took, Mr. Bright was warranted in asserting that the constitution never gave the House of Lords any power of reimposing a tax which the Commons had repealed. The truth is, that if the majority of the House of Commons in favour of the repeal of the paper duties had been anything considerable, the House of Lords would never have ventured to interfere. There was an impression among many peers that the remission was not much liked even by the majority of those who voted for it. 'Gladstone has done it all,' was the common saying; and it was insisted that Gladstone had done it only to satisfy Mr. Bright and the Manchester Radicals. Not a few of the peers felt convinced that the majority of the House of Commons would secretly bless them for their intervention.

Lord Palmerston followed up the report of the committee by proposing a series of resolutions which he probably considered equal to the occasion. The object of the resolutions was to reaffirm the position and the claims of the House of Commons in regard to questions of taxation. That at least was the ostensible object; the real object was to do something which should leave a way of retreat open to the Lords in another session, and at the same time make those who clamoured against their intervention believe that the Ministry were not indifferent to the rights of the representative chamber. The first resolution affirmed that 'the right of granting aids and supplies to the Crown is in the Commons alone, as an essential part of their constitution; and the limitation of all such grants as to the matter, manner, measure and time, is only in them.' The second resolution declared that although the Lords had rejected Bills relating to taxation by negativing the whole, yet the exercise of such a power had not been frequent, and was justly regarded by the House of Commons with peculiar jealousy as affecting the right of the Commons to grant the supplies. The third resolution merely laid it down that 'to guard for the future against an undue exercise of that power by the Lords, and to secure to the Commons their rightful control over taxation and supply,' the House reaffirmed its right to impose and remit taxes, and to frame Bills of Supply.

Such resolutions were not likely to satisfy the more impatient among the Liberals. An appeal was made to the people generally to thunder a national protest against the House of Lords. But the country did not, it must be owned, respond very tumultuously to the invitation. Great public meetings were held in London and the large towns of the North, and much anger was expressed at the conduct of the Lords. The *Morning Star* newspaper led the agitation. It had recourse to the ingenious device of announcing every day in large letters and in a conspicuous part of its columns that the House of Lords had that day imposed so many thousand pounds of taxation on the English people, contrary to the fundamental principles of the constitution. It divided the whole amount of the reimposed duty by the number of days in the year, and thus arrived at the exact sum which it declared to have been each day unconstitutionally imposed on the country. This device was copied by the promoters of public meetings, and M. Taine, the French author, then in this country, was amused to see placards borne about in the streets with this portentous announcement. Mr. Bright threw his eloquence and his influence into the agitation, and Mr. Gladstone expressed himself strongly in favour of its object. Yet the country did not become greatly excited over the controversy. It did not even enter warmly into the question as to the necessity of abolishing the House of Lords. One indignant writer insisted that if the Lords did not give way the English people would turn them out of Westminster Palace and strew the Thames with the wrecks of their painted chamber. Language such as this sounded oddly out of tune with the temper of the time. The general conviction of the country was undoubtedly that the Lords were in the wrong; that whatever their technical right, if they had any, they had made a mistake, and that it would certainly be necessary to check them if they attempted to repeat it. But the feeling also was that there was not the slightest chance of such a mistake being repeated. The mere fact that so much stir had been made about it was enough to secure the country against any chance of its passing into a precedent. In truth, the country could not be induced to feel any fear of persistent unconstitutional action on the part of the House of Lords. That House is known by everyone to hold most of its technical rights on condition of its rarely exercising them. When once its action in any particular case has been seriously called in question, it may be taken for granted that that action will not be repeated. Its principal function in the State now is to interpose at some moment of emergency and give the House of Commons time to think over some action which seems inconsiderate. This is a very important and may be a very useful office. At first sight it may appear a little paradoxical to

compare the functions of the English House of Lords in any way with those of the chief magistrate of the United States; and yet the delaying power which the President possesses is almost exactly the same as that which our usages, even more than our constitution, have put at the discretion of the House of Lords. The President can veto a Bill in the first instance. But the Legislature can afterwards, if they will, pass the measure in spite of him by a certain majority. Practically this means that the President can say to the Legislature, 'I think this measure has not been very carefully considered; I send it back, and invite you to think the matter over again. If when you have done so, you still desire to pass the measure, I can make no further objection.' This is all that the House of Lords can now do, and only in exceptional cases will the peers venture to do so much. Most people knew in 1860 that the interposition of the House of Lords only meant the delay of a session; and knew too that the controversy which had been raised upon the subject, such as it was, would be quite enough to keep the peers from carrying the thing too far. A course of action which Mr. Gladstone denounced as a 'gigantic innovation,' which Lord Palmerston could not approve, which the Liberal party generally condemned, and which the House of Commons made the occasion of a significantly warning resolution, was not in the least likely to be converted by repetition into an established principle and precedent. This was the reason why the country took the whole matter with comparative indifference. It was not in the least influenced by the servile arguments which many Conservatives and a few feeble Liberals employed to make out a constitutional case for the House of Lords. One orator, Mr. Horsman, carried his objection to democracy so far as to undertake an elaborate argument to prove that the House of Lords had a taxing power co-ordinate with that of the House of Commons. It may be imagined to what a depth party feeling had brought some men down when it is stated that this nonsense was applauded by the Conservatives in the House of Commons. Luckily for the privileges of the House of Lords, no serious attention was paid to Mr. Horsman's argument. If that indiscreet champion of the authority of the Lords could have made out his case, if he could have shown that the peers really had a taxing power co-ordinate with that of the Commons, there would have been nothing for it but to make new arrangements and withdraw from the hereditary assembly so inappropriate a privilege. For it may be surely taken for granted that the people of this country would never endure the idea of being taxed by a legislative body over whose members they had no manner of control.

The whole controversy has little political importance now. Perhaps

it is most interesting for the evidence it gave that Mr. Gladstone was every day drifting more and more away from the opinions, not merely of his old Conservative associates, but even of his later Whig colleagues. The position which he took up in this dispute was entirely different from that of Lord Palmerston. He condemned without reserve or mitigation the conduct of the Lords, and he condemned it on the very grounds which made his words most welcome to the Radicals. He did not indeed give his support to the course of extreme self-assertion which some Radical members recommended to the House of Commons; but he made it clear that he only disclaimed such measures because he felt convinced the House of Lords would soon come to its senses again, and would refrain from similar acts of unconstitutional interference in the future. The first decided adhesion of Mr. Gladstone to the doctrines of the more advanced Liberals is generally regarded as having taken place at a somewhat later period, and in relation to a different question. It would seem, however, that the first decisive intimation of the course Mr. Gladstone was thenceforward to tread was his declaration that the constitutional privileges of the representative assembly would not be safe in the hands of the Conservative Opposition. Mr. Gladstone was distinctly regarded during that debate as the advocate of a policy far more energetic than any professed by Lord Palmerston. The promoters of the meetings which had been held to protest against the interference of the Lords found full warrant for the course they had taken in Mr. Gladstone's stern protest against the 'gigantic innovation.' Lord Palmerston, on the other hand, certainly suffered some damage in the eyes of the extreme Liberals. It became more clear than ever to them that he had no sympathy with any Radical movement here at home, however he might sympathise with every Radical movement on the Continent. Still Lord Palmerston's resolutions contained in them quite enough to prove to the Lords that they had gone a little too far, and that they must not attempt anything of the kind again. A story used to be told of Lord Palmerston at that time which would not have been out of character if it had been true. Some one, it was said, pressed him to say what he intended to do about the Lords and the re-imposition of the paper duties. 'I mean to tell them,' was the alleged reply of Lord Palmerston, 'that it was a very good joke for once, but they must not give it to us again.' This was really the effect of Palmerston's resolutions. All very well for once; but don't try it again. The Lords took the hint. They did not try it again. Even in that year, 1860, Mr. Gladstone was able to carry his resolution for removing, in accordance with the provisions of the French Treaty, so much of the Customs duty on imported paper as exceeded the excise duty on paper made here at home.

Meanwhile the Government had sustained a severe humiliation in another way. They had had to abandon their Reform Bill. The Bill was a moderate and simple scheme of reform. It proposed to lower the county franchise to 10*l.*, and that of the boroughs to 6*l.*; and to make a considerable redistribution of seats. Twenty-five boroughs returning two members each were to return but one for the future, and the representation of several large counties and divisions of counties was to be strengthened; Kensington and Chelsea were to form a borough with two members; Birkenhead, Staleybridge, and Burnley were to have one member each; Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, and Birmingham were each to have an additional member; the University of London was to have a member. It was also proposed that where there were three members to a constituency the third should represent the minority, an end to be accomplished by the simple process of allowing each elector to vote for only two of the three. The Bill was brought in on March 1. The second reading was moved on March 19. Mr. Disraeli condemned the measure then, although he did not propose to offer any opposition to it at that stage. He made a long and laboured speech, in which he talked of the Bill as 'a measure of a mediæval character, without the inspiration of the feudal system or the genius of the Middle Ages.' No one knew exactly what this meant; but it was loudly applauded by Mr. Disraeli's followers, and was thought rather fine by some of those who sat on the Ministerial side. Mr. Disraeli also condemned it for being too homogeneous in its character; by which he was understood to mean that he considered there was too great a monotony or uniformity in the suffrage it proposed to introduce. Long nights of debate more or less languid followed. Mr. Disraeli, with his usual sagacity, was merely waiting to see how things would go before he committed himself or his party to any decided opposition. He began very soon to see that there was no occasion for him to take any great trouble in the matter. He and his friends had little more to do than to look on and smile complacently while the chances of the Bill were being hopelessly undermined by some of the followers of the Government. The milder Whigs hated the scheme rather more than the Tories did. It was Lord John Russell's scheme. Russell was faithful to the cause of reform, and he was backed up by the support of Cobden, Bright, and the Manchester and Radical party in general. But the Bill found little favour in the Cabinet itself. It was accepted principally as a means of soothing the Radicals and appeasing Lord John Russell. Lord Palmerston was well known to be personally indifferent to its fate. There was good reason to believe that, if left to himself, he would never have introduced such a measure, or any measure having the same object. Lord

Palmerston was not so foreseeing as Mr. Disraeli. The leader of the Opposition knew well enough even then that a Reform Bill of some kind would have to be brought in before long. There is not the least reason to suppose that he ever for a moment fell into Lord Palmerston's mistake, and fancied that the opinions of the clubs, of the respectable Whigs, and of the metropolitan shopkeepers, represented the opinions of the English people. Mr. Disraeli probably foresaw even then that it might be convenient to his own party one day to seek for the credit of carrying a Radical Reform Bill. He therefore took care not to express any disapproval of the principles of reform in the debates that took place on the second reading of Lord John Russell's Bill. His manner was that of one who looks on scornfully at a bungling attempt to do some piece of work which he could do much better if he had a chance of making the attempt. 'Call that a Reform Bill!' he seemed to say, 'that piece of homogeneousness and mediævalism, which has neither the genius of feudalism nor the spirit of the Middle Ages! Only give me a chance some day of trying my hand again, and then you shall see the genius of the Middle Ages, and the later ages, and feudalism, and all the rest of it, combined to perfection.'

Meanwhile the Bill was drifting and floundering on to destruction. If Lord Palmerston had spoken one determined word in its favour, it could have been easily carried. The Conservatives would not have taken on themselves the responsibility of a prolonged resistance. Those of the Liberals who secretly detested the measure would not have had the courage to stand up against Lord Palmerston. Their real objection to the proposed reform was that it would put them to the trouble of a new election, and that they did not like the extreme Radicals and the Manchester School. But they would have swallowed their objections if they had supposed that Lord Palmerston was determined to pass the Bill. Very soon they came to understand, or at least to believe, that Lord Palmerston would be rather pleased than otherwise to see the measure brought into contempt. Lord Palmerston took practically no part in the debates. He did actually make a speech at a late period; but, as Mr. Disraeli said with admirable effect, it was a speech not so much 'in support of, as about, the Reform Bill.' Sir George Lewis argued for the Bill so coldly and sadly that Sir E. B. Lytton brought down the laughter and cheers of both sides of the House when he described Lewis as having 'come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.' The measure was already doomed: it was virtually dead and buried. Notice was given of amendment after amendment, chiefly or altogether by professing Liberals. The practice of obstructing the progress of the Bill by incessant speech-making was introduced and

made to work with ominous effect. Some of the more boisterous of the Tories began to treat the whole thing as a good piece of fun. Once an attempt was made to get the House counted out during the progress of the debate. It would be a capital means of reducing the whole discussion to an absurdity, some members thought, if the House could actually be counted out during a debate on the Reform Bill. A Bill to remould the whole political constitution of the country—and the House of Commons not caring enough about the subject to contribute forty listeners, or even forty patient watchers, within the precincts of Westminster Palace! When the attempt to count did not succeed in the ordinary way, it occurred to the genius of some of the Conservatives that the object might be accomplished by a little gentle and not unacceptable violence. A number of stout squires therefore got round the door in the lobby, and endeavoured by sheer physical obstruction to prevent zealous members from re-entering the House. It will be easily understood what the temper of the majority was when horse-play of this kind could even be attempted. At length it was evident that the Bill could not pass; that the talk which was in preparation must smother it. The moment the Bill got into committee there would be amendments on every line of it, and every member could speak as often as he pleased. The session was passing; the financial measures could not be postponed or put aside; the opponents of the Reform Bill, open and secret, had the Government at their mercy. On Monday, June 11, Lord John Russell announced that the Government had made up their minds to withdraw the Bill. There was no alternative. Lord Palmerston had rendered to the Bill exactly that sort of service which Kemble rendered to the play of 'Vortigern and Rowena.' Kemble laid a peculiar emphasis on the words, 'And when this solemn mockery is o'er,' and glanced at the pit in such a manner as to express only too clearly the contempt he had for the part which he was coerced to play; and the pit turned the piece into ridicule and would have no more of it. If Kemble had approved of the play, they might have put up with it for his sake; but when he gave them leave, they simply made sport of it. Lord Palmerston conveyed to his pit his private idea on the subject of the Reform Bill which he had officially to recommend; and the pit took the hint, and there was an end of the Bill.

Lord Palmerston became more unpopular than ever with the advanced Liberals. He had yielded so far to public alarm as to propose a vote of two millions, the first instalment of a sum of nine millions, to be laid out in fortifying our coast against the Emperor of the French. He was accused of gross inconsistency. The statesman who went out of his way to give premature recognition to Louis Napoleon after the *coup d'état*; the

statesman of the Conspiracy Bill was now clamouring for the means to resist a treacherous invasion from his favourite ally. Yet Lord Palmerston was not inconsistent. He had now brought himself seriously to believe that Louis Napoleon meditated evil to England; and with Palmerston, right or wrong, England was the one supreme consideration. To us he seems to have been wrong when he patronised Louis Napoleon, and wrong when he wasted money in measures of superfluous protection against Louis Napoleon; but we do not think the latter Palmerston was inconsistent with the former.

Thenceforward it was understood that Lord Palmerston would have no more of Reform. This was accepted as a political condition by most of Lord Palmerston's colleagues. Even Lord John Russell accepted the condition and bowed to his leader's determination, as George III.'s ministers came to bend to his scruples with regard to Catholic Emancipation. There was to be no Reform Bill while Lord Palmerston lived.

CHAPTER XLII.

TROUBLES IN THE EAST.

The Queen's Speech at the opening of Parliament on January 24, 1860, mentioned, among other things, the renewal of disturbances in China. The English and French Plenipotentiaries, it stated, had proceeded to the mouth of the Peiho river in order to repair to Pekin and exchange in that city the ratifications of the Treaty of Tien-tsin. They found their further progress opposed, and a conflict took place between the Chinese forts at the mouth of the river and the naval force by which the Plenipotentiaries were escorted. The allied forces were compelled to retire; and the Royal Speech mentioned that an expedition had been despatched to obtain redress.

The treaty of Tien-tsin was that which, as was told in a former chapter, had been arranged by Lord Elgin and Baron Gros. The treaty contained a clause providing for the exchange of the ratifications at Pekin within a year from the date of the signature, which took place in June 1858. Lord Elgin returned to England, and his brother, Mr. Frederick Bruce, was appointed in March 1859, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to China. Mr. Bruce was directed to proceed by way of the Peiho to Tien-tsin and thence to Pekin to exchange the ratifications of the treaty. In the instructions furnished to him, Lord Malmesbury, who

was then Foreign Secretary, earnestly pressed upon the Envoy the necessity of insisting on having the ratifications exchanged at Pekin. Lord Malmesbury pointed out that the Chinese authorities, having the strongest objection to the presence of an Envoy in Pekin, would probably try to interpose all manner of delays and difficulties; and impressed upon Mr. Bruce that he was not to be put off from going to the capital. Mr. Bruce was distinctly directed to go to the mouth of the Peiho with 'a sufficient naval force' and was told that unless some 'unforeseen circumstances' should interpose to make another arrangement necessary, it would be desirable that he should go to Tien-tsin in a British man-of-war. Instructions were sent out from England at the same time to Admiral Hope, the Naval Commander-in-Chief in China, to provide a sufficient force to accompany Mr. Bruce to the mouth of the Peiho.

The Peiho river flows from the highlands on the west into the Gulf of Pecheli, at the north-east corner of the Chinese dominions. The capital of the Empire is about one hundred miles inland from the mouth of the Peiho. It does not stand on that river, which flows past it at some distance westward, but it is connected with the river by means of a canal. The town of Tien-tsin stands on the Peiho near its junction with one of the many rivers that flow into it, and about forty miles from the mouth. The entrance to the Peiho was defended by the Taku forts. On June 20, 1859, Mr. Bruce and the French Envoy reached the mouth of the Peiho with Admiral Hope's fleet, some nineteen vessels in all, to escort them. Admiral Hope had sent a message two or three days before to Taku to announce that the English and French Envoys were coming, and his boat had found the forts defended and the river staked by an armed crowd, who stated that they were militiamen, and said that they had no instructions as regarded the passage of the Envoys, but offered to send any message to Tien-tsin and to bring back any answer which the authorities there might think fit to send. Admiral Hope again sent to them, and requested them to remove the obstructions in the river and clear a passage for the Envoys. They do not appear to have actually refused the request, but they said that they had sent a messenger to Tien-tsin to announce the approach of the fleet. When, however, the Envoys reached the mouth of the river they found the defences further increased. Some negotiations and intercommunications took place, and a Chinese official from Tien-tsin came to Mr. Bruce and endeavoured to obtain some delay or compromise. Mr. Bruce became convinced that the condition of things predicted by Lord Malmesbury was coming about, and that the Chinese authorities were only trying to defeat his purpose. He also imagined, or discovered, that there was a want of proper respect for an English Envoy shown in the terms of

the letter and the rank of the official by whom it was conveyed. After a consultation with the French Envoy, Mr. Bruce called on Admiral Hope to clear a passage for the vessels. On June 25 the Admiral brought his gunboats close to the barriers and began to attempt their removal. The forts opened fire. The Chinese artillerymen showed unexpected skill and precision. Four of the gunboats were almost immediately disabled. All the attacking vessels got aground. Admiral Hope attempted to storm the forts. The attempt was a complete failure. About 1,000 Englishmen and 100 French went into action, of whom nearly 450 were killed or wounded. Admiral Hope himself was wounded; so was the commander of the French vessel which had contributed a contingent to the storming party. An American naval captain rendered great service to the English and French in their distress. With 'magnanimous indiscretion' he disregarded the strict principles of international law; declared that 'blood was thicker than water,' and that he could not look on and see Englishmen destroyed by Chinese without trying to lend them a helping hand. The attempt to force a passage of the river was given up, and the mission to Pekin was over for the present.

It will be easily imagined that the news created a deep sensation in England. It soon became known that although the Chinese Government did not exactly accept the responsibility of what had occurred on the Peiho, yet they bluntly and rudely refused to make any apology for the attack on our ships or to punish the officials who had ordered it. People in general made up their minds at once that the matter could not be allowed to rest there and that the mission to Pekin must be enforced. At the same time a strong feeling prevailed that the Envoy, Mr. Bruce, had been imprudent and precipitate in his conduct. Lord Elgin had himself stated that we could have no right to navigate the Peiho until after the ratification of the treaty; and, however discourteous or even double-dealing the conduct of the Chinese authorities might have been, it was surely a questionable policy to insist on forcing our way to the capital by one particular route to which for any reason they objected. For this, however, it seems more just to blame Lord Malmesbury than Mr. Bruce. Lord Malmesbury had of course no idea of what was likely to happen; but his instructions to the English Envoy read as if they were prepared with a view to that very contingency. Mr. Bruce might well have thought that they left him no alternative but to force his way. Before the whole question came to be discussed in Parliament the Conservatives had gone out and the Liberals had come in. Lord Palmerston's Government were only responsible in a technical sort of way for what had happened; and to do them justice they only defended the proceeding in a very cold and per-

functory manner. But they could hardly condemn their predecessors, whose action they had to continue and whose responsibilities they had to assume, and there did not seem much use in attacking the conduct of men who were out of office and were no longer amenable to Parliamentary censure. On the other hand, it seems only fair to say that the outcry raised in England about the treacherous conduct of the Chinese at the mouth of the Peiho was unfounded and even absurd. The Chinese Government showed itself as usual crafty, double-dealing, and childishly arrogant for a while; but the Chinese at the Peiho cannot be accused of perfidy. They had mounted the forts and barricaded the river openly and even ostentatiously. The English Admiral knew for days and days that the forts were armed and that the passage of the river was obstructed. A man who when he sees you approaching his hall-door closes and bars it against you, and holds a rifle pointed at your head while he parleys with you from an upper window, may be a very inhospitable and discourteous person; but if when you attempt to dash in his door he fires at you with his rifle, you can hardly call him treacherous, or say that you had no expectation of what was going to happen. Some of the English officers who were actually engaged in the attempt of Admiral Hope frankly repudiated the idea of any treachery on the part of the Chinese, or any surprise on their own side. They knew perfectly well, they said, that the forts were about to resist the attempt to force a way for the Envoys up the river.

The English and French Governments determined that the men who had made the treaty of Tien-tsin—Lord Elgin and Baron Gros—should be sent back to insist on its reinforcement. Sir Hope Grant was appointed to the military command of our land forces, and General Cousin de Montauban, afterwards Count Palikao, commanded the soldiers of France. We need not here enter into the military history of the expedition. The English and French made short work of the Chinese resistance. The Chinese, to do them justice, fought very bravely, as indeed they seem to have done on all occasions when war was forced on them; but of course they had no chance whatever against such forces as those commanded by the English and French generals. The allies captured the Taku forts, occupied Tien-tsin, and marched on Pekin. The Chinese Government endeavoured to negotiate for peace, and to interpose any manner of delay, diplomatic or otherwise, between the allies and their progress to the capital. Lord Elgin consented at last to enter into negotiations at Tungchow, a walled town ten or twelve miles nearer than Pekin. The Chinese Commissioners were to meet the European Plenipotentiaries at Tungchow. Lord Elgin's secretaries, Mr. Parkes and Mr. Loch, accompanied by some English officers, by Mr. Bowlby, the correspondent of the *Times*, and by some members of

the staff of Baron Gros, went to Tungchow to make the necessary arrangements for an interview between the Envoys and the Chinese Commissioners. On their way back they had to pass through the lines of a large Chinese force, which had occupied the ground marked out by the commissioners themselves for the use of the European allies. Some quarrel took place between a French commissariat officer and some Tartar soldiers, and a sort of general engagement was brought on. Mr. Parkes and Mr. Loch, and several of their companions, French and English, were seized and dragged off to various prisons, despite the fact that they bore a flag of truce and were known to have come for the purpose of arranging a conference requested by the Chinese themselves with a view to peace. Twenty-six British subjects and twelve subjects of France were thus carried off. Mr. Parkes and Mr. Loch were afterwards released, after having been treated with much cruelty and indignity. Of the twenty-six British subjects thus seized, thirteen died of the horrible ill-treatment they received. The thirteen who were released all bore more or less evidence physically of the usage which had been inflicted on them. Lord Elgin refused to negotiate until the prisoners had been returned, and the allied armies were actually at one of the great gates of Pekin and had their guns in position to blow the gate in, when the Chinese acceded to their terms. The gate was surrendered, the allies entered the city, and the English and French flags were hoisted side by side on the walls of Pekin. It was only after entering the city that Lord Elgin learned of the murder of the captives. He then determined to inflict an exemplary and a signal punishment on the Chinese authorities. The Chinese Summer Palace, a building, or rather a park and collection of buildings of immense extent, had been plundered somewhat efficiently by the French on their march to Pekin. The French Commander-in-Chief had become possessed of a magnificent diamond necklace, which, according to popular rumour, was afterwards an adornment of the festivities of the Imperial Tuileries. Lord Elgin now determined that the palace should be burnt down as a means of impressing the mind of the Chinese authorities generally with some sense of the danger of treachery and foul play. 'What remains of the palace,' such was Lord Elgin's stern notification, 'which appears to be the place at which several of the British captives were subjected to the grossest indignities, will be immediately levelled to the ground; this condition requires no assent on the part of his Highness' (Prince Kung, the Chinese Emperor's brother and Plenipotentiary), 'because it will be at once carried into effect by the Commander-in-Chief.' Two days were occupied in the destruction of the palace. It covered an area of many miles. The palace of Adrian, at Tivoli, might have been hidden in one of its courts. Gardens,

temples, small lodges and pagodas, groves, grottos, lakes, bridges, terraces, artificial hills, diversified the vast space. All the artistic treasures, all the curiosities, archæological and other, that Chinese wealth and Chinese taste, such as it was, could bring together, had been accumulated in this magnificent pleasaunce. The surrounding scenery was beautiful. The high mountains of Tartary ramparted one side of the enclosure. 'It certainly was,' says a spectator, 'one of the most curious, and also one of the most beautiful, scenes I had ever beheld.' The buildings were set on fire; the whole place was given over to destruction. A monument was raised with an inscription in Chinese, setting forth that such was the reward of perfidy and cruelty.

Very different opinions were held in England as to the destruction of the Imperial palace. To many it seemed an act of unintelligible and unpardonable vandalism. Assuredly the responsibility which Lord Elgin assumed was great. It was all the greater because the French Plenipotentiary refused to share it. This was not, however, because the French Envoy thought it an act of mere vandalism. The French, who had remorselessly looted the palace, who had made it a wreck before Lord Elgin converted its site into a desert, could hardly have offered any becoming protest in the interests of art and of conciliation. The French Plenipotentiary was merely of opinion that the destruction of the palace might interfere with the negotiations for peace which he was naturally anxious to bring to a conclusion. Lord Elgin assumed a heavy responsibility another way, inasmuch as he did not consider the capture of the Englishmen to have been a deliberate act of treachery on the part of the Chinese authorities. 'On the whole,' he wrote, 'I come to the conclusion that in the proceedings of the Chinese Plenipotentiaries and Commander-in-Chief in this instance there was that mixture of stupidity, want of straightforwardness, suspicion, and bluster which characterises so generally the conduct of affairs in this country; but I cannot believe that after the experience which Sang-ko-lin-sin' (the Chinese general-in-chief) 'had already had of our superiority in the field, either he or his civil colleagues could have intended to bring on a conflict in which, as the event has proved, he was sure to be worsted.' Still, Lord Elgin held that for the ill-treatment and murder of men who ought never to have been touched with unfriendly hand, the Chinese authorities must be held responsible; and that even war itself must become ten times more horrible if it were not one of its essential conditions that the messengers engaged in the preliminaries of peace are to be held sacred from harm.

In this Lord Elgin was undoubtedly right. The only question was as to his justification in adopting what seemed to be so illogical and bar-

barous a mode of taking vengeance. Would any breach of faith committed by the Grand Duke of Tuscany, when there was such a prince, have justified a foreign conqueror in destroying the Pitti Palace? Would any act of treachery committed by a Spanish sovereign justify the destruction of the Alhambra? To such demands Lord Elgin would have answered that he had no other way of recording in memorable characters his condemnation of the cruelty perpetrated by the Chinese. He explained, that if he did not demand the surrender of the actual perpetrators, it was because he knew full well that no difficulty would have been made about giving him a seeming satisfaction. The Chinese Government would have handed over to him as many victims as he chose to ask for, or would have executed as many as he thought fit to suggest. They would have selected for vicarious punishment, in all probability, a crowd of mean and unfortunate wretches who had no more to do with the murders than Lord Elgin had himself, who perhaps had never heard that such murders were done, and who would possibly even go to their death without the slightest notion of the reason why they were chosen out for such a doom. That was the chief reason which determined Lord Elgin. We confess it seems to us to have some strength in it. Most of our actions in the war were unjustifiable; this was the one for which, perhaps, the best case could be made out by a moralist. It is somewhat singular that so many persons should have been roused to indignation by the destruction of a building who took with perfect composure the unjust invasion of a country.

The allied Powers now of course had it all their own way. A convention was made by which China agreed that the representatives of England and France should reside either permanently or occasionally in Pekin according as the English and French Governments might decide, and that the port of Tien-tsin should be open to trade and to the residence of foreign subjects. China had to pay a war indemnity and a large sum of money as compensation to the families of the murdered prisoners and to those who had suffered injuries, and to make an apology for the attack by the garrison of the Taku forts. Thus England established her right to have an envoy in Pekin, whether the Chinese liked it or not. The practical result was not very great. Perhaps the most important gain to Europe was the knowledge that Pekin was not by any means so large a city as we had all imagined it to be. British geographies had time out of mind taught British children that Pekin was the largest city in the world. Now we learned that it was not nearly so large as several other cities, and that it was, on the whole, rather a crumbling and tumble-down sort of place. There is some comfort in knowing that so much blood was not spilt wholly in vain.

The same year saw also the troubles in the mountain terraces of the Lebanon, which likewise led to the combined intervention of England and France. The disturbances arose out of the rivalries and quarrels between two sects, the Maronites and those whom Mr. Browning's poem describes as 'the Druse nation, warders on the mount of the world's secret since the birth of time.' In the month of May a Maronite monk was found murdered, and suspicion fell upon the Druses. Some Druses were killed apparently in retaliation. Then there were some killings on each side. On May 28 a general attack was made by the Druses on the Maronite villages in the neighbourhood of Beyrout, and some of them were burnt down. A large town under Mount Hermon was attacked by the Druses. The Turkish commander ordered the Maronites to lay down their arms and promised that he would protect them. They did give up their arms and the Turkish officer had the weapons removed. Then he seems to have abandoned the Maronites to their enemies. The Druses, animated by such a spirit as might have belonged to their worshipped chief and saint, Hakem, poured into the place and massacred them all. The Turkish soldiers did not make any attempt to protect them, but even, it was stated, in some cases helped the Druses in their work of butchery. In July the fanatical spirit spread to Damascus. A mob of Turkish fanatics made a general attack upon the Christian quarter and burned the greater part of it down. The consulates of France, Russia, Austria, Holland, Belgium, and Greece were destroyed. Nearly two thousand Christians were massacred in that one day's work. Many of the respectable Mussulman inhabitants of Damascus were most generous and brave in their attempts to save and shelter the unfortunate Christians; but the Turkish Governor of Damascus, although he had a strong military force at his disposal, made no serious effort to interfere with the work of massacre; and, as might be expected, his supineness was construed by the mob as an official approval of their doings, and they murdered with all the more vigour and zest. The famous Algerian chief, Abd-el-Kader, was then living in Damascus, and he exerted himself nobly in the defence and protection of the Christians. France had treated him when fallen and a prisoner with something like generosity, and he well repaid in this season of horror to the Christians in Damascus any debt that he may have owed to a Christian people.

The news of the massacres in the Lebanon naturally created a profound sensation in England. The cause of the disturbance was not very clearly understood in the first instance, and it was generally assumed that it was a mere quarrel of religion between Christians and Mahomedans. The Maronites being Christians, 'a sect of Syrian Christians, united to

Rome, although preserving their own primitive discipline,' the Druses were assumed to be Mussulmans. Mr. Urquhart gave an amusing, and not altogether exaggerated, description of the manner in which English public opinion is made up on Eastern questions. Conversing, he says, with a Druse of the Lebanon long before this particular outbreak, he observed to the Druse, 'You get up one morning and cut each other's throats; then people at Beyrout or elsewhere sit down and write letters. One says the Maronites are a very virtuous and oppressed people of Christians; another says they are served right, for they are only Roman Catholics. One says the Druses have done it all; they are savages: another the Turks have done it all; they are ferocious, perfidious, and fanatic. Then the people in London begin to write who dwell in rooms on the housetop.' This, it is to be understood, is Mr. Urquhart's playful way of describing the authors of newspaper articles, whom, in accordance with a tradition still prevailing when he was young, he assumes to be the occupants of garrets. 'They say these people are very ill off; we must protect them; or we must punish them; or we must convert them. Then they all cry out, "We must put down the Turkish Government." After this has been written and paid for, it is printed; and after it is printed it is sold. Then all the nation buys it, and after it has bought it it reads it while it is eating its breakfast. Then each man goes out and meets his friends and talks it. This is the way the people of England occupy themselves about their affairs; and they call it by a name which being translated means universal guess. They smile then at each other, and say, "We are great men; we know all that is doing in the world, we govern the world; like unto us were none since Noah came out of the ark."' Mr. Urquhart was a very clever, self-opinionated, and often curiously wrong-headed man. He had seen much of the East and had a knowledge of Eastern ways and Eastern history which few Englishmen could equal. But he was under the absolute dominion of a mania with regard to Russia which distorted all his faculties. Men who found that he could entertain as articles of faith some theories about English diplomacy and English statesmen which seemed almost too wild for the ordinary occupant of a madhouse, might well begin to doubt whether all his knowledge of the East must necessarily help him to any better conclusions about Asia than he had formed about the political men and affairs of his own country. In the passage which has been quoted he did, however, give a very fair exposition of the confusion of idea that prevailed in England about the disturbances in Syria. He was also able to make it quite clear that, whatever the Druses were, they were not Mussulmans. The nooks of the Mountain, a well-informed writer says, 'are not more sequestered from the dwellings

of man than the faith of the Druses is segregated from that of Christian or Moslem.' Mr. Urquhart ascribed the cause of the quarrels to the intervention of the European Powers in 1840, and of course to the secret influence of Russia working through that intervention. It is probable that the intervention did help, in one sense, to lead to the dissensions. The Great Powers started in 1840 and in 1841 a variety of theories about the better government of the Lebanon, one of which was that it should have two governors, a Druse and a Maronite. This was found impracticable, owing to the fact that in many parts of the Lebanon the two sects were living in inextricable companionship. The bare idea, however, was probably effectual in starting a new sort of rivalry. The Porte did finally grant a certain amount of administrative autonomy to the Lebanon, and, having granted this under pressure, it is not unlikely that they were anxious to reduce it to as little of practical value as possible. Probably the Porte was unwilling to make use of any antipathy existing between Druses and Maronites. The Porte was also under the impression, rightly or wrongly, that the Maronites were planning an attack upon the Druses with the object of shaking off the Turkish yoke. It may be that Constantinople was anxious to anticipate matters and to call in the fanaticism of the Druses to rid them of the Maronites. Certainly the manner in which the Turkish officials at first seemed to connive at the massacres might have justified any such suspicion in the mind of Europe.

England and France took strong and decisive steps. They resolved upon instant intervention to restore tranquillity in the Lebanon. A convention was drawn up, to which all the Great Powers of Europe agreed, and which Turkey had to accept. By the convention England and France were entrusted with the duty of restoring order. France undertook to supply the troops required in the first instance; further requirements were to be met as the intervening Powers might think fit. The intervening Powers pledged themselves reciprocally not to seek for any territorial advantage or exclusive influence. England sent out Lord Dufferin to act as her Commissioner; and Lord Dufferin accomplished his task with as much spirit as judgment. The Turkish Government, to do it justice, had at last shown great energy in punishing the authors and the abettors of the massacres. The Sultan sent out Fuad Pasha, his Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the Lebanon; and Fuad Pasha showed no mercy to the promoters of the disturbances, or even to the highly-placed official abettors of them. The governor of Damascus and the commander of the Turkish troops suffered death for their part in the transactions, and about sixty persons were publicly executed in the city, of whom the greater number belonged to the Turkish police force. Lord

Dufferin described what he actually saw in such a manner as to prove that even alarmed rumour had hardly exaggerated the horrors of the time. Lord Dufferin tells that he came to Deir-el-Kamer a few days after the massacre. 'Almost every house was burnt, and the street crowded with dead bodies, some of them stripped and mutilated in every possible way. My road led through some of the streets; my horse could not even pass, for the bodies were literally piled up. Most of those I examined had many wounds, and in each case the right hand was either entirely or nearly cut off; the poor wretch, in default of weapons, having instinctively raised his arm to parry the blow aimed at him. I saw little children of not more than four years old stretched on the ground, and old men with grey beards.'

The intervention was successful in restoring order and in providing for the permanent peace of Syria. It had one great recommendation; it was thorough. It was in that respect a model intervention. To intervene in the affairs of any foreign State is a task of great responsibility. The cases are few indeed in which it can be justified or even excused. But it has long been to all seeming a principle of European statesmanship that Turkey is a country in the government of which it is necessary for other Powers to intervene from time to time. The whole of the policy of what is called the Eastern Question is based on the assumption that Turkey is to be upheld by external influence, and that being thus virtually protected she is liable also to be rebuked and kept in order. Now there may be some doubt as to the propriety of intervening at all in the affairs of Turkey, but there can be no doubt that when intervention does take place it should be prompt and it should be thorough. The independence of Turkey is at an end when a conference of foreign Ministers sits round a table to direct what she is to do; it is then merely a question of convenience and expediency as to the extent to which intervention shall go. Nothing can be more illogical and more pernicious in its way than to say, 'We will intervene just far enough to take away from the Turkish Government its domestic supremacy and its responsibility; but, out of consideration for its feelings, or its convenience, we will not intervene far enough to make it certain that what we think necessary shall be promptly and efficiently done.' In the case of the Syrian disturbances the intervention was conducted on a practical principle. The Great Powers, acting on the assumption, which alone could justify their interference, that Turkey was not in a condition to restore order herself, proceeded to do this for her in the most energetic and complete manner. The consent of Turkey was not considered necessary. The Sultan was distinctly informed that the interference would take place whether he approved of it or not. When

the intervention had succeeded in thoroughly restoring order, the representatives of the Great Powers assembled in Constantinople unanimously agreed that a Christian governor of the Lebanon should be appointed in subordination to the Sultan, and the Sultan had, of course, no choice but to agree to this proposition. The French troops evacuated Syria in June 1861, and thereby much relieved the minds of many Englishmen, who had long forgotten all about the domestic affairs of the Lebanon in their alarm lest the French Imperial troops, having once set foot in Syria, should not easily be induced to quit the country again. This was not merely a popular and ignorant alarm. On June 26, 1861, Lord Palmerston wrote to the British Ambassador at Constantinople, Sir Henry Bulwer, 'I am heartily glad we have got the French out of Syria, and a hard job it was to do so. The arrangement made for the future government of the Lebanon will, I dare say, work sufficiently well to prevent the French from having any pretext for returning thither.' In the same letter Lord Palmerston makes a characteristic allusion to the death of the Sultan of Turkey, which had taken place the very day before: 'Abd-ul-Medjid was a good-hearted and weak-headed man, who was running two horses to the goal of perdition—his own life and that of his empire. Luckily for the empire, his own life won the race.' Then Palmerston adds, 'If the accounts we have heard of the new Sultan are true, we may hope that he will restore Turkey to her proper position among the Powers of Europe.' A day or two after, Lord Wodehouse, on the part of the Government, expressed to the House of Lords a confident hope that a new era was about to dawn upon Turkey. Another new era!

It would hardly be fitting to close the history of this stormy year without giving a few lines to record the peaceful end of a life which had through all its earlier parts been one of 'sturt and strife.' Quietly in his Kensington home passed away, in the late autumn of this year, Thomas Cochrane—the gallant Dundonald, the hero of the Basque Roads, the volunteer who lent his genius and his courage to the cause of Brazil, of Chili, and of Greece; a sort of Peterborough of the waves, a 'Swiss of heaven.' Lord Dundonald had been the victim of cruel, although not surely intentional, injustice. He was accused, as everyone knows, of having had a share in the famous stockjobbing frauds of 1814; he was tried, found guilty, sentenced to fine and imprisonment; expelled from the House of Commons, dismissed from the service which he had helped to make yet more illustrious than he found it; and deprived of all his public honours. He lived to see his innocence believed in as well by his enemies as by his friends. William IV. reinstated him in his naval rank, and Queen Victoria had the congenial task of completing the restoration

of his well-won honours. It was not, however, until many years after his death that the country fully acquitted itself of the mere money debt which it owed to Lord Dundonald and his family. Cochrane was a Radical in politics, and for some years sat as a colleague of Sir Francis Burdett in the representation of Westminster. He carried on in the House of Commons many a bitter argument with Mr. John Wilson Croker, when the latter was Secretary to the Admiralty. It cannot be doubted that Cochrane's political views and his strenuous way of asserting them made him many enemies, and that some men were glad of the opportunity for revenge which was given by the accusation got up against him. His was an impatient spirit, little suited for the discipline of Parliamentary life. His tongue was often bitter, and he was too apt to assume that a political opponent must be a person unworthy of respect. Even in his own service he was impatient of rebuke. To those under his command he was always genial and brotherly; but to those above him he was sometimes wanting in that patient submission which is an essential quality of those who would learn how to command with most success. Cochrane's true place was on his quarter-deck; his opportunity came in the extreme moment of danger. Then his spirit asserted itself. His gift was that which wrenches success out of the very jaws of failure; he saw his way most clearly when most others began to despair. During part of his later life he had been occupying himself with some inventions of his own—some submarine methods for blowing up ships, some engines which were, by their terrible destructiveness, to abridge the struggles and agonies of war. At the time of the Crimean War he offered to the Government to destroy Sebastopol in a few hours by some of his plans. The proposal was examined by a committee and was not accepted. It was his death, on October 30, 1860, which recalled to the mind of the living generation the hero whose exploits had divided the admiration of their fathers with those of Nelson, of Collingwood, and of Sidney Smith. A new style of naval warfare has come up since those days, and perhaps Cochrane may be regarded as the last of the old sea-kings.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA.

Civil war broke out in the United States. The long threatened had come to pass. Abraham Lincoln's election as President, brought about by the party divisions of the Southerners among themselves, seemed to

the South the beginning of a new order of things, in which they and their theories of government would no longer predominate. They felt that the peculiar institution on which they believed their prosperity and their pride to depend was threatened with extinction, and they preferred secession to such a result. In truth, the two sets of institutions were incompatible. A system founded on slavery could not be worked much longer in combination with the political and social institutions of the Northern States. The struggle was one for life or death between slavery and the principles of modern society. When things had come to this pass it is hardly worth stopping to consider what particular event it was which brought about the actual collision. If the election of Mr. Lincoln had not supplied the occasion; something else would have furnished it. Those who are acquainted with the history of the great emancipation struggle in America know very well that if the South had not seceded from the Union, some of the Northern States would sooner or later have done so. Every day in the Northern States saw an increase in the number of those who would rather have seceded than give further countenance to the system of slavery. It was a peculiarity of that system that it could not stand still; it could not rest content with tolerance and permission to hold what it already possessed. It must have new ground, new fields to occupy. It must get more or die. Most of the Abolitionists would rather themselves secede than yield any more to slavery.

We are chiefly concerned in this history with the American Civil War in so far as it affected England. It becomes part of our history, by virtue of the *Alabama* question and the Treaty of Washington. It is important to introduce a short narrative of the events which led to the long dispute between England and the United States, a dispute which brought us more than once to the very edge of war, and which was only settled by the almost unparalleled concession of the Washington Treaty. The Southern States, led by South Carolina, seceded. Their delegates assembled at Montgomery, in Alabama, on February 4, 1861, to agree upon a Constitution. A Southern confederation was formed, with Mr. Jefferson Davis as its President. Mr. Davis announced the determination of the South to maintain its independence by the final arbitrament of the sword, 'if passion or lust of dominion should cloud the judgment or influence the ambition of the North.' This announcement was made on February 18, 1861, and on March 4 following the new President of the United States entered formally into office. Mr. Lincoln announced that he had no intention to interfere with the institution of slavery in any State where it existed; that the law gave him no power to do so, even if he had the inclination; but that, on the other hand, no State could, upon its own

mere motion, lawfully get out of the union; that acts of violence against the authority of the United States must be regarded as insurrectionary or revolutionary. There was still an impression in this country, and to some extent in America, that an invitation was thus held out by Mr. Lincoln to the Southern States to enter into peaceful negotiations, with a view to a dissolution of partnership. But if there was any such intention in the mind of Mr. Lincoln, or any possibility of carrying it into effect, all such contingencies were put out of the question by the impetuous action of South Carolina. This State had been the first to secede, and it was the first to commit an act of war. The traveller in South Carolina, as he stands on one of the quays of Charleston and looks towards the Atlantic, sees the sky line across the harbour broken by a heavy-looking solid square fort, which soon became famous in the war. This was Fort Sumter, a place built on an artificial island, with walls some sixty feet high and eight to twelve feet thick. It was in the occupation of the Federal Government, as of course were the defences of all the harbours of the Union. It is, perhaps, not necessary to say that while each State made independently its local laws, the Federal Government and Congress had the charge of all business of national interest: customs duties, treaties, the army and navy, and the coast defences. The Federal Government had therefore a garrison in Fort Sumter, and when there seemed a possibility of civil war, they were anxious to reinforce it. A vessel which they sent for the purpose was fired at, from a great island in the harbour, by the excited Secessionists of South Carolina, and on April 12 the Confederates, who had erected batteries on the mainland for the purpose, began to bombard the fort. The little garrison had no means of resistance, and after a harmless bombardment of two days it surrendered, and Fort Sumter was in the hands of the Secessionists of South Carolina. The effect of this piece of news on the mind of the North has been well and tersely described by a writer of the time. It was as if while two persons were still engaged in a peaceful discussion as to some claim of right, one suddenly brought the debate to a close by giving the other a box on the ear. There was an end to all negotiation; thenceforward only strokes could arbitrate.

Four days after, President Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand men to volunteer in re-establishing the Federal authority over the rebel States. President Davis immediately announced his intention to issue letters of marque. President Lincoln declared the Southern ports under blockade. On May 8 Lord John Russell announced in the House of Commons, that after consulting the law officers of the Crown the Government were of opinion that the Southern Confederacy must be recognised

as a belligerent power. On May 13 the neutrality proclamation was issued by the Government, warning all subjects of Her Majesty from enlisting, on land or sea, in the service of Federals or Confederates, supplying munitions of war, equipping vessels for privateering purposes, engaging in transport service, or doing any other act calculated to afford assistance to either belligerent. This was, in fact, the recognition of the Southern Confederacy as a belligerent power; and this was the first act on the part of England which gave offence in the North. It was regarded there as an act of unseemly and even indecent haste, as evidence of an overstrained anxiety to assist and encourage the Southern rebels. This interpretation was, to some extent, borne out by the fact that the English Government did not wait for the daily-expected arrival of Mr. Adams, the new American minister, to hear what he might have to say before resolving on issuing the proclamation. Yet it is certain that the proclamation was made with no unfriendly motive. It was made at the instance of some of the most faithful friends the Northern cause had on this side of the Atlantic, conspicuous among whom in recommending it was Mr. W. E. Forster. If such a proclamation had not been issued, the English Government could not have undertaken to recognise the blockade of the Southern ports. If there was no *bellum* going on, the commerce of the world could not be expected to recognise President Lincoln's blockade of Charleston and Savannah and New Orleans.

International law on the subject is quite clear. A State cannot blockade its own ports. It can only blockade the ports of an enemy. It can, indeed, order a closure of its own ports. But a closure of the ports would not have been so effective for the purposes of the Federal Government as a blockade. It would have been a matter of municipal law only. An offender against the ordinance of closure could be only dealt with lawfully in American waters; an offender against the decree of blockade could be pursued into the open sea. In any case, Mr. Lincoln's Government chose the blockade. They had previously announced that the crews of Confederate privateers would be treated as pirates, but their proclamation of the blockade compelled them to recede from that declaration. It was, indeed, a threat that modern humanity and the public feeling of the whole Northern States would never have allowed them to carry out, and which Mr. Lincoln himself, whose temper always leaned to mercy, would never have thought of putting into effect. The proclamation of a blockade compelled the Federal Government to treat privateers as belligerents. It could not but compel foreign States to admit the belligerent rights of the Southern Confederation.

In England the friends of the North, or some of them at least, were anxious that the recognition should take place as quickly as possible, in order that effect should be given to the President's proclamation. The English Government had trouble enough afterwards to resist the importunity of those at home and abroad who thought they ought to break the blockade in the interests of European trade. They could have no excuse for recognising it if they did not also recognise that there was a war going on which warranted it. Therefore, whether the recognition of the Southern Confederates as belligerents was wise or unwise, timely or premature, it was not done in any spirit of unfriendliness to the North, or at the spiriting of any Southern partisans. It was done at the urgency of friends of the North, and in what was believed to be the interest of President Lincoln's Government. It seems to us that in any case the recognition was fully justified. The proclamation began by setting forth that 'hostilities had unhappily begun between the Government of the United States and certain States styling themselves the Confederate States of America.' Before its issue Fort Sumter had been taken, Mr. Seward, the new Federal Secretary of State, had announced, in a despatch, that the insurgents had 'instituted revolution with open, flagrant, deadly war;' and that the United States had 'accepted this civil war as an inevitable necessity.' Many days before the proclamation was issued the New York Chamber of Commerce had stated that secession had culminated in war, and the judges of the higher courts had decided that a state of war existed. Under such circumstances it seems hardly possible to contend that England was bound by any principle of law, international or other, to withhold her recognition.

With the proclamation of neutrality on the part of Her Majesty's Government began, curiously enough, the long diplomatic controversy which was carried on between this country and the United States. The correspondence spreads over years. It is maintained principally by Earl Russell, Mr. Adams, American minister in London, and Mr. Seward, American Secretary of State. The diplomatic correspondence is conducted, as might be expected, with unvarying courtesy, and with at least the outward expression of good temper; but it deepens sometimes in tone and earnestness, so that any reader can see that it is reaching a tension not likely to be long kept up. More than once it becomes evident that the States thus represented are on the verge of a serious quarrel. The impression on the part of the United States evidently is, all throughout, that England is the concealed and bitter enemy of the Union, and is seizing every possible opportunity to do it harm. The first cause of dispute is the recognition of belligerent rights. Then there comes the seizure

of the Confederate envoys in the *Trent*, which England could not permit, and which apparently the public of the United States could not forgive her for not being able to permit and thus putting them in the wrong. Far more serious as a cause of quarrel was the career of the *Alabama* and her kindred vessels. The Mexican expedition was a grievance to the North, connected as it was with the supposed inclination of the English Government to follow the promptings of the French Emperor and concede to the Southern Confederates their actual recognition as an independent State.

It is necessary to endeavour to follow the course of public opinion in England and ascertain, if possible, the meaning of its various changes. Let it be firmly stated at the outset, as a matter of justice, that it was not any feeling of sympathy with slavery which influenced so many Englishmen in their support of the South. No real evidence exists of any change in public opinion of that kind. It is true that sometimes a heated champion of the South did, when driven to bay for argument, contend that after all perhaps slavery was not quite so bad a thing as people fancied. The *Times* did once venture to suggest that the Scriptures contained no express interdiction of slavery; but no great stress even there was laid upon such an argument; and it might be doubted whether the opinion of any rational man on the slavery question was changed in this country by sympathy with the South. On the contrary, strange as it may seem at first, the dislike of many Englishmen to the slave system converted them first into opponents of the North and next into partisans of the South. An impression got abroad that the Northern statesmen were not sincere in their reprobation of slavery, and that they only used the arguments and the feeling against it as a means of endeavouring to crush the South. Many Englishmen could not understand—some of them perhaps would not understand—that a Northern statesman might very well object to breaking up the Union in order to put down slavery, and might yet, when an enemy endeavoured to destroy the Union, make up his mind, with perfect consistency; that the time had come to get rid of the slave system once for all. The statesmen of the North were not to be classed as Abolitionists. Not many men in office, or likely just then to be in office, were professed opponents of slavery. Most of them regarded it as a very objectionable institution which the Southern States had unfortunately inherited, which no one would think of introducing then if it had not been introduced before, but which nevertheless it was not worth risking a national convulsion for the sake of trying to root out at once. They would have been willing to trust to time and education, and all the civilising processes, for the gradual extinction of the system. Many of

them had even known so many good and kindly Southern slave-owners, that they could not feel a common hatred for all the upholders of the unfortunate institution. Men like Mr. Lincoln himself would have gladly kept to the Union, even though, for the present and for some time to come, Union meant the toleration of slavery in the South. Two extreme parties there were who would not compromise: the planter faction of the South and the Abolitionists of New England. The planters were not content that their institution should be tolerated; they would have it extended and made supreme. The Abolitionists took their stand on principle; slavery was to them simply a crime, and they would have nothing to do with the accursed thing. When at last the inevitable collision came, there was nothing inconsistent or unreasonable in the position of the Northern statesman who said, 'I am opposed to all sudden changes in our constitution; I would not have broken up the Union on the question of Southern slavery; but now that the Southerners themselves have chosen to secede and to begin a civil war, I say the time has come to get done with this long-standing cause of quarrel, and to decree once for all the extinction of the slave system.'

That came, in fact, as the war went on, to be the position of Mr. Lincoln and of many other Northern statesmen. It was the position which practical statesmen would have been likely to take, and might have been expected to take. Yet it seemed to many Englishmen to argue mere hypocrisy that a man should be intolerant of slavery when it led to secession and civil war, if he had been willing to put up with it for the sake of peace. Again, Englishmen insisted that the Northern statesmen were not going into the war with an unmixed motive; as if any State ever yet went to war with one single and undiluted purpose. A good deal was heard about the manner in which the coloured race were excluded from society in New York and the Northern States generally. The exclusiveness was assuredly narrow-minded and bad enough; but it is one thing to say a coloured man shall not sit next us in a theatre or a church, that he shall not go to school with one's son or marry one's daughter, and it is quite another thing to say that we have a right to scourge the coloured man to death, to buy his son for a slave, and sell his daughter at the auction-block. A citizen of one of the Canadian provinces might strongly object to the society of the Red Indian in any form, and yet might be willing to arm against a system which would reduce the Red Indian to a condition of slavery. Not a few Englishmen condemned, boldly and out of hand, the whole principle of coercion in political affairs. They declared that the North had no right to put down secession; that the South had a right to secede. Yet the same men had upheld the heaven-appointed right

of England to put down the rebellion in India, and would have drenched, if need were, Ireland in blood rather than allow her to withdraw from a partnership into which, after all, unlike the Southern States, she had never volnntarily entered.

At first, however, the feeling of Englishmen was almost unanimously in favour of the North. It was thought that the Southern States would be allowed quietly to secede, and most Englishmen did not take a great interest in the matter, or, when they did, were inclined to regard the Southerners as a turbulent and troublesome set, who had better be permitted to go off with their peculiar institution and keep it all to themselves. When, however, it became apparent that the secession must lead to war, then many of the same Englishmen began to put the blame on the North for making the question any cause of disturbance to the world. There was a kind of impatient feeling as if we and the world in general had no right to be troubled with these American quarrels, as if it was unfair to us that our cotton trade should be interrupted and we ourselves put to inconvenience for a dispute about secession. There clearly would have been no war and no disturbance if only the North had agreed to let the South go, and therefore people on this side of the Atlantic set themselves to find good cause for blaming the statesmen who did not give in to anything rather than disturb the world with their obstinacy and their Union. Out of this condition of feeling came the resolve to find the North in the wrong; and out of that resolve came with many the discovery that the Northern statesmen were all hypocrites. Suddenly, as if to decide wavering minds, an event was reported which made hosts of admirers for the South in England. The Battle of Bull Run took place on July 21, 1861, and the raw levies of the North were defeated, thrown into confusion, and in some instances driven into ignominious flight.

This was not very surprising. The Southern men were infinitely better fitted for the beginning of a war than the men of the North. The Southerners had always a taste for soldiering, and had kept up their state militia systems with an energy and exactness which the business-men of the North had neither the time nor the inclination to imitate. The Southern militia systems were splendid training schools for arms, and became the nucleus each of an excellent army when at last the war broke out. The Northern Government had yielded to a popular cry, and made a premature movement on Richmond, in Virginia, now the Southern capital. It was not very surprising, therefore, that the South should have won the first battle. It was not very surprising either if some of the hastily-raised Northern regiments of volunteers should have proved wretched soldiers and should have yielded to the sudden influence of panic. But when the

news reached England, it was received by vast numbers with exultation, and with derision at the expense of the 'Yankees.' It had been well settled that the Yankees were hypocrites and low fellows before; but now it came out that they were mere runaways and cowards. The English people, for a brave nation, are surprisingly given to accusing their neighbours of cowardice. They have a perfect mania for discovering cowardice all over the world. Napoleon was a coward to a past generation; the French were for a long time cowards; the Italians were cowards; at the time of the Schleswig-Holstein war the Germans were cowards; the Russians still are cowards. In 1861 the Yankees were the typical cowards of the earth. A very flame of enthusiasm leaped up for the brave South, which, though so small in numbers, had contrived with such spirit and ease to defeat the Yankees. Something of chivalry there was, no doubt, in the wish that the weaker side should win; but that chivalry was strongly dashed with the conviction that after all the South had the better fighters and was sure to succeed in the end; that the American Union was in some mysterious way a sort of danger to England, and that the sooner it was broken up the better. Mr. Cobden afterwards accused the English Government of having dealt with the United States as if they were dealing with Brazil or some such weak and helpless State. It is important for the fair understanding and appreciation of the events that followed, to remember that there was, among all the advocates of the South in England, a very general conviction that the North was sure to be defeated and broken up, and was therefore in no sense a formidable power. It is well also to bear in mind that there were only two European States which entertained this feeling and allowed it to be everywhere understood. The Southern scheme found support only in England and in France. In all other European countries the sympathy of people and Government alike went with the North. In most places the sympathy arose from a detestation of slavery. In Russia, or at least with the Russian Government, it arose from a dislike of rebellion. But the effect was the same: that assurances of friendship came from all civilized countries to the Northern States except from England and France alone. One of the latest instructions given by Cavour on his deathbed in this year was that an assurance should be sent to the Federal Government that Italy could give its sympathies to no movement which tended to the perpetuation of slavery. The Pope, Pius IX., and Cardinal Antonelli repeatedly expressed their hopes for the success of the Northern cause. On the other hand, the Emperor of the French fully believed that the Southern cause was sure to triumph and that the Union would be broken up; he was even very willing to hasten what he assumed to be the unavoidable

end. He was anxious that England should join with him in some measures to facilitate the success of the South by recognising the Government of the Southern Confederation. He got up the Mexican intervention, of which we shall have occasion presently to speak, and which assuredly he would never have attempted if he had not been persuaded that the Union was on the eve of disruption. He was not without warning. Many eminent Frenchmen, well acquainted with America, urged on him the necessity of caution. His cousin, Prince Napoleon, went over to America and surveyed the condition of affairs from both points of view, talked with the leaders on both sides, visited both camps, and came back impressed with the conviction that the Southern movement for independence would be a failure. The Emperor Napoleon, however, held to his own views and his own schemes. He had afterwards reason to curse the day when he reckoned on the break-up of the Union and persuaded himself that there was no occasion to take account of the Northern strength. Yet in France the French people in general were on the side of the North. Only the Emperor and his Government were on that of the South. In England, on the other hand, the vast majority of what are called the influential classes came to be heart and soul with the South. The Government was certainly not so, but it can hardly be doubted that the Government allowed itself sometimes to be overborne by the clamour of a West End majority, and gave the North only too much reason to suspect that its defeats were welcome to those in authority in England. Lord Palmerston made some jesting allusion in a public speech to the 'unfortunate rapid movements' of the Northern soldiers at Bull Run; and the jibe was bitterly resented by many Americans.

At first the Northern States counted with absolute confidence upon the sympathy of England. The one reproach Englishmen had always been casting in their face was that they did not take any steps to put down slavery. Not long before this time Lord Brougham, at a meeting of a Statistical Congress in London, where the American minister happened to be present, delivered a sort of lecture at him on the natural equality of the black with the white. All England had just been in a state of wild excitement about the case of the fugitive slave Anderson. An escaped slave, who had taken refuge in Canada, was demanded back by the United States Government—at that time, be it remembered, still a Southern Government—because in trying to escape he had killed one of those who strove to stay his flight and capture him. The idea seemed monstrous to Englishmen, that any British or colonial court of law should give back as a criminal a man who had only done that which English law would warrant him in doing—resisted, even to slaying, an attempt to

make him a slave. The fugitive was not given up to the United States. The colonial courts discharged him from custody on the ground of some informality in the warrant of detention and he came to England. But the Court of Queen's Bench here had already issued a writ of *habeas corpus* to bring him before it, on the ground that his detention in Toronto, even while waiting the decision of the colonial court, was illegal; and if it had not so happened that he was released from custody before the writ could interfere, some very important and difficult questions in international law might have had to be decided. In this country public opinion was warmly in favour of the release of Anderson, and would have gone any length to save him from being surrendered to his captors. Public opinion was expressing itself soundly and justly. It would have amounted to a recognition of slavery if an English court had consented, on any ground, to hand over as a criminal a man who merely resisted an attempt to drag him back into servitude. This was just before the accession of Mr. Lincoln to office. It was the common expectation of the Northern States that England would welcome the new state of things, under which the demand for the return of a fugitive slave was never likely to insult them. The English Government had had for years and years incessant difficulties with the Government of the United States while the latter was in the hands of the South. Coloured subjects of the Queen had been seized in Charleston and carried off into slavery, and it was not possible to get any redress. For years we had been listening to complaints from our Governments about the arrogance and insolence of the American statesmen in office, who were all more or less under the control of the South. It is easy to understand, therefore, how Mr. Lincoln and his friends counted on the sympathy of the English Government and the English people, and how surprised they were when they found English statesmen, journalists, preachers, and English society generally, deriding their misfortunes and apparently wishing for the success of their foes. The surprise changed into a feeling of bitter disappointment, and that gave place to an angry temper, which exaggerated every symptom of ill-will, distorted every fact, and saw wrong even where there only existed an honest purpose to do right.

It was while this temper was beginning to light up on both sides of the Atlantic that the unfortunate affair of the *Trent* occurred. The Confederate Government had resolved to send envoys to Europe to arrange, if possible, for the recognition of the Southern States. Mr. W. L. Yancey, an extreme advocate of the doctrine of State sovereignty, had already been in Europe with this purpose; and now Mr. Davis was anxious to have a regular envoy in London and another in Paris. Mr.

Slidell, a prominent Southern lawyer and politician, was to represent the South at the Court of the Emperor Napoleon, provided he could obtain recognition there; and Mr. James Murray Mason, the author of the Fugitive Slave Law, was to be despatched with a similar mission to the Court of Queen Victoria. The two Southern envoys escaped together from Charleston, one dark and wet October night, in a small steamer, and got to Havana. There they took passage for Southampton in the English mail steamer *Trent*. The United States sloop of war, *San Jacinto*, happened to be returning from the African coast about the same time. Her commander, Captain Wilkes, was a somewhat hot-tempered and indiscreet officer. He was cruising about in quest of the Confederate privateer *Sumter*, and while at Havana he learned that the Confederate agents, with their secretaries, were on their way to Europe. He determined to intercept them. Two hundred and fifty miles from Havana he awaited them in the Bahama Channel. The *Trent* approached; he summoned her to heave to, and his summons being disregarded, fired a shot across her bows. An armed party was then sent on board, and the Confederate envoys were seized, with their secretaries, and carried as prisoners on board the *San Jacinto*, despite the protest of the captain of the English steamer and from under the protection of the English flag. The prisoners were first carried to New York, and then confined in one of the forts in Boston harbour.

Now, there cannot be the slightest doubt of the illegality of this proceeding on the part of Captain Wilkes. It was not long, to be sure, since England had claimed and exercised a supposed right of the same kind. But such a claim had been given up, and could not, in 1861, have been maintained by any civilised State. It was a claim which the United States Governments had especially exerted themselves to abolish. This was the view taken at once by President Lincoln, whose plain good sense served him in better stead than their special studies had served some Professors of International Law. We have it on the excellent authority of Dr. Draper, in his 'History of the American Civil War,' that Mr. Lincoln at once declared that the act of Captain Wilkes could not be sustained. He said, 'This is the very thing the British captains used to do. They claimed the right of searching American ships and carrying men out of them. That was the cause of the war of 1812. Now, we cannot abandon our own principles. We shall have to give these men up and apologise for what we have done.' This was, in fact, the course that the American Government had to take. Mr. Seward wrote a long letter in answer to Lord Russell's demand for the surrender of the prisoners, in which he endeavoured to make out that Captain Wilkes had acted in

accordance with English precedents, but stated that he had not had any authority from the American Government to take such a course, and that the Government did not consider him to have acted in accordance with the law of nations. 'It will be seen,' Mr. Seward went on to say, 'that this Government cannot deny the justice of the claim presented to us, in this respect, upon its merits. We are asked to do to the British nation what we have always insisted all nations ought to do unto us.' He announced, therefore, that the four prisoners would be 'cheerfully liberated.' On January 1, 1862, the Confederate envoys were given up on the demand of the British Government, and sailed for Europe.

The question, then, it might be thought, was satisfactorily settled. Unfortunately, however, a great deal of harm had been done in the meantime. Popular clamour in the United States had entirely approved of the action of Captain Wilkes. A mass meeting held in Tammany Hall or the Cooper Institute of New York, or even in the less vehement Faneuil Hall of Boston, is not exactly an assembly qualified to give an authoritative decision on questions of international law. The Secretary of the Navy, however, who ought to have known better but did not, had commended the action of the captain of the *San Jacinto*. A vote of thanks had been passed to Captain Wilkes in the House of Representatives, Washington, 'for his arrest of the traitors Slidell and Mason.' Under these circumstances, it is not surprising if people on this side of the ocean should have fancied that the United States were eager to sustain a great act of wrong done against us and against international law. But, on the other hand, the arrest was so absolutely without justification that the English Government might well have known President Lincoln's Cabinet could not sustain it. The Governments of all the great European States promptly interposed their good advice, pointing out to Mr. Lincoln the impossibility of maintaining Captain Wilkes's act. The foreign envoys in Washington, and the Orleans princes then in that city, had given the same good advice. Lord Palmerston's Government acted, however, as if an instant appeal to arms must be necessary. Lord Russell sent out to Washington a peremptory demand for the liberation of the envoys and an apology, and insisted on an answer within seven days. Troops were at once ordered out to Canada, and a proclamation was issued forbidding the export of arms and munitions of war. All this was done, although on the very day that Lord Russell was despatching his peremptory letter to Washington, Mr. Seward was writing to London to assure her Majesty's Government that the arrest had been made without any authority from the United States Government, and that the President and his advisers were then considering the proper course to take. The

fact that Mr. Seward's letter had been received was, for some reason or other, not made publicly known in England at the time, and the English people were left to believe that the action of Captain Wilkes either was the action of the American Government or had that Government's approval. Public feeling therefore raged and raved a good deal on both sides. American statesmen believed that the English Government was making a wanton and offensive display of a force which they had good reason to know would never be needed. The English public was left under the impression that the American statesmen were only yielding to the display of force. The release of the prisoners did not seem to our people to come with a good grace. It did not seem to the American people to have been asked or accepted with a good grace. Mr. Seward might as well, perhaps, when he had made up his mind to restore the prisoners, have spared himself the trouble of what the Scotch would call a long 'haver,' to show that if he acted as England had done he should not have given them up at all. But Mr. Seward always was a terribly eloquent despatch writer, and he could not, we may suppose, persuade himself to forego the opportunity of issuing a dissertation. On the other hand, Lord Palmerston's demeanour and language were what he would probably himself have called, in homely language, 'bumptious' if someone else had been in question. Lord Palmerston could not deny himself the pleasure of a burst of cheap popularity, and of seeming to flourish the flag of England in the face of presumptuous foes. The episode was singularly unfortunate in its effect upon the temper of the majority in England and America. From that moment there was a formidable party in England who detested the North, and a formidable party in the North who detested England.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE CRUISE OF THE 'ALABAMA.'

The cause of peace between nations lost a good friend at the close of 1861. The Prince Consort died. It is believed that the latest advice he gave on public affairs had reference to the dispute between England and the United States about the seizure of the Confederate envoys, and that the advice recommended calmness and forbearance on the part of the

English Government. It is not to be supposed, of course, that the Prince Consort even thought of suggesting that the English Government should acquiesce in what had been done, or allow the wrong to remain unredressed. He knew, as every reasonable man might have known, that the error of the American sailor was unjustifiable, and would have to be atoned for; but he probably assumed that for that very reason the atonement might be awaited without excitement, and believed that it would neither be politic nor generous to make a show of compelling by force what must needs be conceded to justice. The death of the Prince Consort, lamentable in every way, was especially to be deplored at a time when influential counsels tending towards forbearance and peace were much needed in England. But it may be said, with literal truth, that when the news of the Prince's death was made known, its possible effect on the public affairs of England was forgotten or unthought of in the regret for the personal loss. Outside the precincts of Windsor Castle itself the event was wholly unexpected. Perhaps even within the precincts of the Castle there was little expectation up to the last that such a calamity was so near. The public had only learned a few days before that the Prince was unwell. On December 8 the *Court Circular* mentioned that he was confined to his room by a feverish cold. Then it was announced that he was 'suffering from fever, unattended by unfavourable symptoms, but likely, from its symptoms, to continue for some time.' This latter announcement appeared in the form of a bulletin on Wednesday, December 11. About the midnight of Saturday, the 14th, there was some sensation and surprise created throughout London by the tolling of the great bell of St. Paul's. Not many people even suspected the import of the unusual sound. It signified the death of the Prince Consort. He died at ten minutes before eleven that Saturday night, in the presence of the Queen, the Prince of Wales, and the Princesses Alice and Helena. The fever had become fierce and wasting on Friday, and from that time it was only a descent to death. Congestion of the lungs set in, the consequence of exhaustion; the Prince fell into utter weakness, and died conscious but without pain. He knew the Queen to the last. His latest look was turned to her.

The Prince Consort was little more than forty-two years of age when he died. He had always seemed to be in good, although not perhaps robust, health; and he had led a singularly temperate life. No one in the kingdom seemed less likely to be prematurely cut off; and his death came on the whole country with the shock of an utter surprise. The regret was universal; and the deepest regret was for the wife he had

loved so dearly, and whom he was condemned so soon to leave behind. Every testimony has spoken to the singularly tender and sweet affection of the loving home the Queen and Prince had made for themselves. A domestic happiness rare even among the obscurest was given to them. It is one of the necessities of royal position that marriage should be seldom the union of hearts. The choice is limited by considerations which do not affect people in private life. The convenience of States has to be taken into account; the possible likings and dislikings of peoples whom perhaps the bride and bridegroom have never seen and are never destined to see. A marriage among princes is, in nine cases out of ten, a marriage of convenience only. Seldom indeed is it made, as that of the Queen was, wholly out of love. Seldom is it even in love-matches when the instincts of love are not deceived and the affection grows stronger with the days. Everyone knew that this had been the strange good fortune of the Queen of England. There was something poetic, romantic in the sympathy with which so many faithful and loving hearts turned to her in her hour of unspeakable distress.

We have already endeavoured to do justice to the character of the Prince Consort; to show what was his intellectual constitution, what were its strong points, and what its weaknesses and limitations. It is not necessary to go over that task again. It will be enough to say that the country which had not understood him at first was beginning more and more to recognise his genuine worth. Even those who are still far from believing that his influence in politics always worked with good result, are ready to admit that his influence, socially and morally, was that which must always come from the example of a pure and noble life. Of him it might fairly have been said in the classic words that from his mouth 'nihil unquam insolens neque gloriosum exiit.'

Perhaps, as we have been considering the influence of the Prince Consort on the councils of England during the earlier part of the American Civil War, it will be appropriate to quote some sentences in which the eminent American historian already mentioned, Dr. Draper, speaks of him. 'One illustrious man there was in England,' Dr. Draper says, 'who saw that the great interests of the future would be better subserved by a sincere friendship with America than by the transitory alliances of Europe. He recognised the bonds of race. His prudent counsels strengthened the determination of the Sovereign that the *Trent* controversy should have an honourable and peaceful solution. Had the desires of these, the most exalted personages of the realm, been more completely fulfilled, the administration of Lord Palmerston would not have cast a disastrous shadow on the future of the Anglo-Saxon race.' Dr. Draper

may be thought unjust to Lord Palmeston; he certainly is only just to the Prince Consort.

After the dispute about the *Trent*, the feeling between England and the United States became one of distrust, and almost of hostility. We cannot help thinking that the manner in which our Government managed the dispute, the superfluous display of force, like a pistol thrust at the head of a disputant whom mere argument is already bringing to reason, had a great deal to do with the growth of this bitter feeling. The controversy about the *Trent* was hardly over when Lord Russell and Mr. Adams were engaged in the more prolonged and far more serious controversy about the Confederate privateers.

The adventures of the Confederate cruisers began with the escape of a small schooner, the *Savannah*, from Charleston, in June, 1861. It scoured the seas for a while as privateer, and did some damage to the shipping of the Northern States. The *Sumter* had a more memorable career. She was under the command of Captain Semmes, who afterwards became famous, and during her time she did some little damage. The *Nashville* and *Petrel* were also well known for a while. These were, however, but small vessels, and each had only a short run of it. The first privateer which became really formidable to the shipping of the North was a vessel called in her earlier history the *Oreto*, but afterwards better known as the *Florida*. Within three months she had captured fifteen vessels. Thirteen of these she burnt, and the other two were converted into cruisers by the Confederate Government. The *Florida* was built in Birkenhead, nominally for the use of the Italian Government. She got out of the Mersey without detention or difficulty, although the American Minister had warned our Government of her real purpose. From that time Great Britain became what an American writer calls without any exaggeration 'the naval base of the Confederacy.' As fast as shipbuilders could work, they were preparing in British shipping yards a privateer navy for the Confederate Government. Mr. Gladstone said in a speech which was the subject of much comment, that Jefferson Davis had made a navy. The statement was at all events not literally correct. The English shipbuilders made the navy. Mr. Davis only ordered it and paid for it. Only seven Confederate privateers were really formidable to the United States, and of these five were built in British dockyards. We are not including in the list any of the actual war-vessels, the rams and ironclads, that British energy was preparing for the Confederate Government. We are now speaking merely of the privateers.

Of these privateers the most famous by far was the *Alabama*. It was the fortune of this vessel to be the occasion of the establishment of a new

rule in the law of nations. It had nearly been her fortune to bring England and the United States into war. The *Alabama* was built expressly for the Confederate service in one of the dockyards of the Mersey. She was built by the house of Laird, a firm of the greatest reputation in the shipbuilding trade, and whose former head was the representative of Birkenhead in the House of Commons. While in process of construction she was called the '290;' and it was not until she had put to sea and hoisted the Confederate flag, and Captain Semmes, formerly commander of the *Sumter*, had appeared on her deck in full Confederate uniform, that she took the name of the *Alabama*. During her career the *Alabama* captured nearly seventy Northern vessels. Her plan was always the same. She hoisted the British flag, and thus decoyed her intended victim within her reach; then she displayed the Confederate colours and captured her prize. Unless when there was some particular motive for making use of the captured vessels, they were burnt. Sometimes the blazing wreck became the means of decoying a new victim. Some American captain saw far off in the night the flames of a burning vessel reddening the sea. He steered to her aid; and when he came near enough, the *Alabama*, which was yet in the same waters and had watched his coming, fired her shot across his bows, hung out her flag, and made him her prisoner. One American captain bitterly complained that the fire, which seen across the waves at any other time became a summons to every seaman to hasten to the rescue, must thenceforward be a signal to him to hold his course and keep away from the blazing ship. The *Alabama* and her captain were of course much glorified in this country. Captain Semmes was eulogised as if his exploits had been those of another Cochrane or Kanaris. But the *Alabama* did not do much fighting; she preyed on merchant vessels that could not fight. She attacked where instant surrender must be the reply to her summons. Only twice, so far as we know, did she engage in a fight. The first time was with the *Hatteras*, a small blockading ship, whose broadside was so unequal to that of the *Alabama* that she was sunk in a quarter of an hour. The second time was with the United States ship of war *Kearsarge*, whose size and armaments were about equal to her own. The fight took place off the French shore, near Cherbourg, and the career of the *Alabama* was finished in an hour. The Confederate rover was utterly shattered and went down. Captain Semmes was saved by an English steam yacht, and brought to England to be made a hero for a while, and then forgotten. The cruise of the *Alabama* had lasted nearly two years. During this time she had contrived to drive American commerce from the seas. Her

later cruising days were unprofitable; for American owners found it necessary to keep their vessels in port.

All this, however, it will be said, was but the fortune of war. America had not abolished privateering; and if the Northern States suffered from so clever and daring a privateer as Captain Semmes, it was of little use their complaining of it. If they could not catch and capture the *Alabama*, that was their misfortune or their fault. What the United States Government did complain of was something very different. They complained that the *Alabama* was practically an English vessel. She was built by English builders in an English dockyard; she was manned for the most part by an English crew; her guns were English; her gunners were English; many of the latter belonged to the Royal Naval Reserve, and were actually receiving pay from the English Government; she sailed under the English flag, was welcomed in English harbours, and never was in, or even saw, a Confederate port. As Mr. Forster put it very clearly and tersely, she was built by British shipbuilders and manned by a British crew; she drew prizes to destruction under a British flag, and was paid for by money borrowed from British capitalists.

Mr. Adams called the attention of the Government in good time to the fact that the *Alabama* was in course of construction in the dockyard of Messrs. Laird, and that she was intended for the Confederate Government. Lord Russell asked for proofs. Mr. Adams forwarded what he considered proof enough to make out a case for the detention of the vessel pending further enquiry. The opinion of an eminent English lawyer, now Sir Robert Collier, was also sent to Lord Russell by Mr. Adams. This opinion declared that the vessel ought to be detained by the Collector of Customs at Liverpool; and added that it appeared difficult to make out a stronger case of infringement of the Foreign Enlistment Act, 'which, if not enforced on this occasion, is little better than a dead letter.' The English Government still asked for proofs. It did not seem to have occurred to our authorities that if they set a little enquiry on foot themselves they might be able to conduct it much more efficiently than a stranger like Mr. Adams could do. What Mr. Adams asked for was enquiry with a view to detention. He did not ask for the infringement of any domestic law of England; he only asked for such steps to be taken as would allow the law of England to be put in force. The argument of the correspondence on our side seemed to be that a stranger had no right to the protection of our laws until he could make out a case which would amount to the legal conviction of those against whom he asked to be protected. We cannot better summarise the correspondence

than by saying it was as if Mr. Adams had forwarded affidavits alleging that there was a conspiracy to murder him, had named the persons against whom he made the charge, and asked for enquiry and protection from the Government; and the Government had answered that until he could make out a case for the actual conviction of the accused, it was no part of the business of our police to interfere.

Let us dispose of one simple question of fact. There never was the slightest doubt on the mind of anyone about the business for which the vessel in the Birkenhead dockyard was destined. There was no attempt at concealment in the matter. Newspaper paragraphs described the gradual construction of the Confederate cruiser, as if it were a British vessel of war that Messrs. Laird had in hand. There never was any question about her destination. Openly and in the face of day she was built by the Laird firm for the Confederate service. The Lairds built her as they would have built any vessel for anyone who ordered it and could pay for it. We see no particular reason for blaming them. They certainly made no mystery of the matter then or after. Whatever technical difficulties might have intervened, it is clear that no real doubt on the mind of the Government had anything to do with the delays that took place. At last, Lord Russell asked for the opinion of the Queen's Advocate. Time was pressing; the cruiser was nearly ready for sea. Everything seemed to be against us. The Queen's Advocate happened to be sick at the moment, and there was another delay. At last he gave his opinion that the vessel ought to be detained. The opinion came just too late. The *Alabama* had got to sea; her cruise of nearly two years began. She went upon her destroying course with the cheers of English sympathisers and the rapturous tirades of English newspapers glorifying her. Every misfortune that befell an American merchantman was received in this country with a roar of delight. When Mr. Bright brought on the question in the House of Commons, Mr. Laird declared that he would rather be known as the builder of a dozen *Alabamas* than be a man who, like Mr. Bright, had set class against class, and the majority of the House applauded him to the echo. Lord Palmerston peremptorily declared that in this country we were not in the habit of altering our laws to please a foreign State; a declaration which came with becoming effect from the author of the abortive Conspiracy Bill, got up to propitiate the Emperor of the French.

The building of vessels for the Confederates began to go on with more boldness than ever. Two iron rams of the most formidable kind were built and about to be launched In 1863 for the purpose of forcibly opening the Southern ports and destroying the blockading vessels. Mr. Adams

kept urging on Lord Russell, and for a long time in vain, that something must be done to stop their departure. Lord Russell at first thought the British Government could not interfere in any way. Mr. Adams pressed and protested, and at length was informed that the matter was 'now under the serious consideration of her Majesty's Government.' At last, on September 5, Mr. Adams wrote to tell Lord Russell that one of the iron-clad vessels was on the point of departure from this kingdom on its hostile errand against the United States; and added, 'it would be superfluous in me to point out to your lordship that this is war.' On September 8 Mr. Adams received the following:—'Lord Russell presents his compliments to Mr. Adams, and has the honour to inform him that instructions have been issued which will prevent the departure of the two ironclad vessels from Liverpool.'

Throughout the whole of the correspondence Lord Russell took up one position. He insisted that the Government could only act upon the domestic laws of England, and were not bound to make any alteration in these laws to please a foreign State. Nothing can be more self-evident than the fact that the Government cannot infringe the laws of the country. During this controversy the Law Courts decided sometimes, in the case of the *Alexandra*, for example, that there was not evidence enough to justify the seizure or the stoppage of a vessel. But it has to be remembered, that in regard to the *Alabama*, what Mr. Adams asked was not the breaking of English law, but the holding, as it were, of the vessel to bail until the law could be ascertained. There is, however, a much wider question than this, in his views with regard to which Lord Russell seems to have been entirely wrong. The laws of a country are made, first of all, to suit its own people. The people have a right to keep their laws unchanged as long as they please. They are not bound to alter them to suit the pleasure or the convenience of any other nation. All that is clear. But it is equally clear, on the other hand, that they cannot get out of their responsibility to another State by merely saying, 'We have such and such laws, and we do not choose to alter them.' If the laws permit harm to be done to a foreign State, the people maintaining the laws must either make compensation to the foreign State or they must meet her in war. It is absurd to suppose that our neighbours are to submit to injury on our part merely because our laws do not give us the means of preventing the injury. Mr. Adams put it in the fairest manner to Lord Russell. 'This is war.' In other words, the American Government might have said: 'You can allow this sort of thing to go on if you like; but we must point out to you that it is simply war, and nothing else. You are making war or allowing war to be made on us; you cannot shelter yourselves under an imaginary neutrality.

If you choose to keep your laws as they are, very good; but you must take the consequences.' The extraordinary mistake which Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell made was the assumption that the existence of certain domestic regulations of ours could be a sufficient answer to claims made upon us by our neighbours. Suppose we had no Foreign Enlistment Act? Suppose the Confederates were allowed openly to raise armies and equip navies in England, and to fly their flag here and go forth to make war on the United States with the permission of our Government? Would it be enough to say to the United States, 'We are very sorry indeed; we do not like to see people making war on you from our territory; but, unluckily, we have no law to prevent it; and you must, therefore, only put up with it?' The dullest English sympathiser with the cause of the Southern Confederation would not be taken in by a plea like this, or expect the United States to admit it. Yet the case set up by Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell was really not different in kind. It merely pleaded that although our ports were made the basis, and indeed the only basis, of naval operations against the United States, we could not help it; our laws were not so framed as to give our neighbours any protection. The obvious retort on America's side was, 'Then we must protect ourselves; we cannot admit that the condition of your municipal laws entitles you to become with impunity a nuisance and pest to your neighbours.'

The position which Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell took up was wisely and properly abandoned by Lord Stanley, now Lord Derby, when the Conservatives came into office. It was then frankly admitted that every State is responsible for the manner in which the working of its municipal laws may affect the interests of its neighbours. We need not, however, anticipate just now a controversy and a settlement yet to come. Lord Russell, it may be remarked, was mistaken in another part of his case. He was able to show that in some way or other the authorities of the United States had failed to prevent the enlistment of British subjects in this country for the armies of the Union. But his mistake was in supposing that this was a practical answer to the complaints made by Mr. Adams. There is some difference between a small grievance and a very great grievance. The grievance to us in the secret enlistment of a few British subjects for the Northern service was not very serious. The authorities of the United States acknowledged that it was improper, and promised to use all diligence to put a stop to it; and of course, if they had failed to do so, it would be entirely for England to consider what steps she ought to take to obtain a redress of any wrong done to her. But in a practical controversy there was no comparison between the grievances. It is not a reasonable reply to a neighbour who complains that our fierce

dog has broken into his house and bitten his children, if we say that his cat has stolen into our kitchen and eaten our cream. It is strange, too, to observe that Lord Russell and the Chief Baron and other authorities constantly dwell on the fact that a neutral may sell arms to either belligerent, and ask triumphantly if arms, why not an armed vessel? If shot and shell, why not a cruiser or a ram? There is, at all events, one plain reason which would be enough even if there were none other. It is not possible to prove that the shot and shell have done any damage; it is possible to prove that the cruiser has. We cannot follow the rifle or the bullet to its destination; we can follow the *Alabama*. It would be idle to try to prove that a certain lot of gunpowder was discharged against a Northern regiment; but it is easy to prove that the *Alabama* burned American vessels and confiscated American cargoes. The bitterness of the feeling in America was not mitigated, nor the sense of English unfairness made less keen, by the production during the controversy of a despatch sent from England to Washington at the opening of the Crimean War, in which the English Government expressed a confident hope that the authorities of the United States would give orders that no privateer under Russian colours should be equipped or victualled or admitted with its prizes into any of the ports of the United States.

The controversy was carried on for some years. It became mixed up with disputes about Confederate raids from Canada into the States, and later on about Fenian raids from the States into Canada, and questions of fishery right and various other matters of discussion; but the principal subject of dispute, the only one of real gravity, was that which concerned the cruise of the *Alabama*. Lord Russell at length declined peremptorily to admit that the English Government were in any way responsible for what had been done by the Confederate cruisers, or that England was called on to alter her domestic law to please her neighbours. Mr. Adams therefore dropped the matter for the time, intimating however that it was only put aside for the time. The United States Government had their hands full just then; and in any case could afford to wait. The question would keep. The British Government were glad to be relieved from the discussion and from the necessity of arguing the various points with Mr. Adams, and were under the pleasing impression that they had heard the last of it.

Surveying the diplomatic controversy at this distance of time, one cannot but think that Mr. Adams comes best out of it. No minister representing the interests of his State in a foreign capital could have had a more trying position to sustain and a more difficult part to play. Mr. Adams knew that the tone of the society in which he had to move was

hostile to his Government and to his cause. It was difficult for him to remain always patient and yet to show that the American Government could not be expected to endure everything. It was not easy to retain always the calm courtesy which his place demanded, and which was, indeed, an inheritance in his family of stately public men. He was embarrassed sometimes by the officious efforts, the volunteer intervention of some of his own countrymen, who, knowing nothing of English political life and English social ways, fancied they were making a favourable impression on public opinion here by the tactics of a fall campaign at home. Moreover, it is plain that for a long time Mr. Adams was in much doubt as to the capacity of the military leaders of the North; and he well knew that nothing but military success could rescue the Union from the diplomatic conspiracies which were going on in Europe for the promotion of the Southern cause. Mr. Adams appears to have borne himself all through with judgment, temper, and dignity. Lord Russell does not show to so much advantage. He is sometimes petulant; he is too often inclined to answer Mr. Adams' grave and momentous remonstrances with retorts founded on allegations against the North which, even if well-founded, were of slight comparative importance. When Mr. Adams complains that the *Alabama* is sweeping American commerce from the seas, Lord Russell too often replies with some complaint about the enlistment of British subjects for the service of the Union; as if the Confederates making war on the United States from English ports with English ships and crews were no graver matter of complaint than the story, true or false, of some American agent having enlisted Tim Doolan and Sandy Macsnish to fight for the North. Mr. Seward does not come out of the correspondence well. There is a curious evasiveness in his frequent floods of eloquence which contrasts unpleasantly with Mr. Adams' straightforward and manly style. Mr. Seward writes as if he were under the impression that he could palaver Mr. Adams and Lord Russell and the British public into not believing the evidence of their senses. At the gloomiest hour of the fortunes of the North, Mr. Adams faces the facts, and, confident of the ultimate future, makes no pretence at ignoring the seriousness of the present danger. Mr. Seward seems to think that public attention can be cheated away from a recognition of realities by a display of inappropriate rhetorical fireworks. At a moment when the prospect of the North seemed especially gloomy, and when it was apparent to every human creature that its military affairs had long been in hopelessly bad hands, Mr. Seward writes to inform Mr. Adams that 'Our assault upon Richmond is for the moment suspended,' and is good enough to add that 'no

great and striking movements or achievements are occurring, and the Government is rather preparing its energies for renewed operations than continuing to surprise the world by new and brilliant victories.' The Northern commanders had, indeed, for some time been surprising the world, but not at all by brilliant victories; and the suggestion that the Northern Government might go on winning perpetual victories if they only wished it, but that they preferred for the present not to dazzle the world too much with their success, must have fallen rather chillingly on Mr. Adams' ear. Mr. Adams knew only too well that the North must win victories soon, or they might find themselves confronted with a European confederation against them. The Emperor Napoleon was working hard to get England to join with him in recognising the South. Mr. Roebuck had at one time a motion in the House of Commons calling on the English Government to make up their minds to the recognition; and Mr. Adams had explained again and again that such a step would mean war with the Northern States. Mr. Adams was satisfied that the fate of Mr. Roebuck's motion would depend on the military events of a few days. He was right. The motion was never pressed to a division; for during its progress there came at one moment the news that General Grant had taken Vicksburg on the Mississippi, and that General Meade had defeated General Lee at Gettysburg and put an end to all thought of a Southern invasion. This news was at first received with resolute incredulity in London by the advocates and partisans of the South. In some of the clubs there was positive indignation that such things should even be reported. The outburst of wrath was natural. That was the turning-point of the war, although not many saw it even then. The South never had a chance after that hour. There was no more said in this country about the recognition of the Southern Confederation, and the Emperor of the French was thenceforward free to follow out his plans as far as he could and alone.

The Emperor Napoleon, however, was for the present confident enough. He was under the impression that he had heard the last of the protests against his Mexican expedition. This expedition was in the beginning a joint undertaking of England, France, and Spain. Its professed object, as set forth in a convention signed in London on October 31, 1861, was, 'to demand from the Mexican authorities more efficacious protection for the persons and properties of their (the Allied Sovereigns') subjects, as well as a fulfilment of the obligations contracted towards their Majesties by the Republic of Mexico.' Mexico had been for a long time in a very disorganised state. The Constitutional Government of Benito Juarez had come into power, but the reactionary party were still

struggling to regain the upper hand, and a sort of guerilla warfare was actually going on. The Government of Juarez, whatever its defects, gave promise of being stronger and better than that of its predecessors. It was, however, burthened with responsibility for the debts incurred and the crimes committed by its predecessors; and it entered into an agreement with several foreign States, England among the rest, to make over a certain proportion of the Customs revenues to meet the claims of foreign creditors. This arrangement was not kept, and timely satisfaction was not given for wrongs committed against foreign subjects—wrongs for the most part, if not altogether, done by the Government which Juarez had expelled from power, but for which of course he, as the successor to power, was properly responsible. Lord Russell, who had acted with great forbearance towards Mexico up to this time, now agreed to co-operate with France and Spain in exacting reparation from Juarez. But he defined clearly the extent to which the intervention of England would go. England would join in an expedition for the purpose, if necessary, of seizing on Mexican custom-houses, and thus making good the foreign claims. But she would not go a step further. She would have nothing to do with upsetting the Government of Mexico, or imposing any European system on the Mexican people. Accordingly the second Article of the Convention pledged the contracting parties not to seek for themselves any acquisition of territory or any special advantage, and not to exercise in the internal affairs of Mexico any influence of a nature to prejudice the right of the Mexican nation to choose and to constitute freely the form of its government. The Emperor of the French, however, had already made up his mind that he would establish a sort of feudatory monarchy in Mexico. He had long had various schemes and ambitions floating in his mind concerning those parts of America on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico which were once the possessions of France. In his dreamy fantastic way, he had visions of restoring French influence and authority somewhere along the shores of the Gulf; and the outbreak of the Southern rebellion appeared to give him just the opportunity that he desired. At the time when the Convention was signed the affairs of the Federal States seemed all but hopeless, and for a long time after they gave no gleam of hope for the restoration of the Union. Louis Napoleon was convinced then, and for long after, that the Southern States would succeed in establishing their independence. He seems to have been of Mr. Roebuck's way of thinking, that 'the only fear we ought to have is lest the independence of the South should be established without us.' He was glad therefore of the chance afforded him by the Mexican Convention, and at the very time when he signed the convention with the

pledge contained in its second article, he had already been making arrangements to found a monarchy in Mexico. If he could have ventured to set up a monarchy with a French prince at its head, he would probably have done so; but this would have been too bold a venture. He, therefore, persuaded the Archduke Maximilian, brother of the Emperor of Austria, to accept the crown of the monarchy he proposed to set up in Mexico. The Archduke was a man of pure and noble character, but evidently wanting in strength of mind, and he agreed after some hesitation to accept the offer.

Meanwhile the joint expedition sailed. We sent only a line-of-battle ship, two frigates, and 700 marines. France sent in the first instance about 2,500 men, whom she largely reinforced immediately after. Spain had about 6,000 men, under the command of the late Marshal Prim. The Allies soon began to find that their purposes were incompatible. There was much suspicion about the designs of France, although the French statesmen were every day repudiating in stronger and stronger terms the intentions imputed to them, and which soon proved to be the resolute purposes of the Emperor of the French. Some of the claims set up by France disgusted the other Allies. The Jecker claims were for a long time after as familiar a subject of ridicule as our own Pacifico claims had been. A Swiss house of Jecker & Company had lent the former Government of Mexico 750,000 dollars, and got bonds from that Government, which was on its very last legs, for fifteen millions of dollars. The Government was immediately afterwards upset, and Juarez came into power. M. Jecker modestly put in his claim for fifteen millions of dollars. Juarez refused to comply with the demand. He offered to pay the 750,000 dollars lent and five per cent. interest, but he declined to pay exactly twenty times the amount of the sum advanced. M. Jecker had by this time become somehow a subject of France, and the French Government took up his claim. It was clear that the Emperor of the French had resolved that there should be war. At last the designs of the French Government became evident to the English and Spanish Plenipotentiaries, and England and Spain withdrew from the Convention. England certainly ought never to have entered into it. But as she had been drawn in, the best thing then was for her to get out of it as decently and as quickly as she could. Nothing in the enterprise became her like to the leaving of it.

The Emperor of the French 'walked his own wild road, whither that led him.' He overran a certain portion of Mexico with his troops. He captured Puebla after a long and desperate resistance; he occupied the capital, and he set up the Mexican Empire with Maximilian as Emperor.

French troops remained to protect the new Empire. Against all this the United States Government protested from time to time. They disclaimed any intention to prevent the Mexican people from establishing an empire if they thought fit; but they pointed out that grave inconveniences must arise if a foreign Power like France persisted in occupying with her troops any part of the American continent. The Monroe doctrine, which by the way was the invention of George Canning and not of President Monroe, does not forbid the establishing of a monarchy on the American continent, but only the intervention of a European Power to set up such a system, or any system opposed to liberty there. However, the Emperor Napoleon cared nothing just then about the Monroe doctrine, complacently satisfied that the United States were going to pieces, and that the Southern Confederacy would be his friend and ally. He received the protests of the American Government with unveiled indifference. At last the tide in American affairs turned. The Confederacy crumbled away—Richmond was taken; Lee surrendered; Jefferson Davis was a prisoner. Then the United States returned to the Mexican Question, and the American Government informed Louis Napoleon that it would be inconvenient, gravely inconvenient, if he were not to withdraw his soldiers from Mexico. A significant movement of American troops, under a renowned General, then flushed with success, was made in the direction of the Mexican frontier. There was nothing for Louis Napoleon but to withdraw. Up to the last he had been rocked in the vainest hopes. Long after the end had become patent to every other eye, he assured an English member of Parliament that he looked upon the Mexican Empire as the greatest creation of his reign.

The Mexican Empire lasted two months and a week after the last of the French troops had been withdrawn. Maximilian endeavoured to raise an army of his own and to defend himself against the daily increasing strength of Juarez. He showed all the courage which might have been expected from his race and from his own previous history. But in an evil hour for himself, and yielding, it is stated, to the persuasion of a French officer, he had issued a decree that all who resisted his authority in arms should be shot. By virtue of this monstrous ordinance, Mexican officers of the regular army, taken prisoners while resisting, as they were bound to do, the invasion of a European prince, were shot like brigands. The Mexican general, Ortega, was one of those thus shamefully done to death. When Juarez conquered, and Maximilian, in his turn, was made a prisoner, he was tried by court-martial, condemned, and shot. His death created a profound sensation in Europe. He had in all his previous career won respect everywhere, and even in the Mexican scheme he was

universally regarded as a noble victim who had been deluded to his doom. The conduct of Juarez in thus having him put to death raised a cry of horror from all Europe; but it must be allowed that, by the fatal decree which he had issued, the unfortunate Maximilian had left himself liable to a stern retaliation. There was cold truth in the remark made at the time, that if he had been only General and not Archduke Maximilian, his fate would not have aroused so much surprise or anger.

The French Empire never recovered the shock of this Mexican failure. It was chiefly in the hope of regaining his lost *prestige* that the Emperor tried to show himself a strong man in German affairs. More than three years before the fall of Maximilian, the present writer, in commenting on Louis Napoleon's scheme, ventured to predict that Mexico would prove the Moscow of the Second Empire. Time has not shown that the prediction was rash. The French Empire outlived the Mexican Empire by three years and a few weeks. From the entering of Moscow to the arrival at St. Helena the interval was three years and one month.

We need not follow any further the history of the American Civil War. The restoration of the Union, the assassination of President Lincoln, and the emancipation of the coloured race from all the disqualifications, as well as all the bondage, of the slave system, belong to American and not to English history. But the *Alabama* dispute led to consequences which are especially important to England, and which shall be described in their due time. Meanwhile, it is necessary for the proper appreciation of the final terms of settlement, that we should see exactly how the dispute arose, and what was the condition of public feeling in this country at the time when it grew into serious proportions. If the final settlement was felt to be humiliating in England, it must be owned that those who are commonly called the governing classes had themselves very much to blame. Their conviction that the Civil War must lead to the disruption of the Union was at the bottom of much of the indifference and apathy which for a long time was shown by English officials in regard to the remonstrances of the United States. The impression that we might do as we liked with the North was made only too obvious. The United States must, indeed, then have felt that they were receiving a warning that to be weak is to be miserable. It is not surprising if they believed at that time that England was disposed to adopt Sir Giles Overreach's way of thinking—

> We worldly men, when we see friends and kinsmen
> Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand
> To lift them up, but rather set our feet
> Upon their heads to press them to the bottom.

It is not certain that the supporters of the Southern side at any time actually outnumbered the champions of the North and of the Union; but they seemed for the greater part of the war's duration to have the influence of the country mainly with them. A superficial observer might have been excused at one time if he said that England as a whole was on the side of the secession. This would have been a very inaccurate statement of the case; but the inaccuracy would have been excusable, and even natural. The vast majority of what are called the governing classes were on the side of the South. By far the greater number of the aristocracy, of the official world, of members of Parliament, of military and naval men, were for the South. London club life was virtually all Southern. The most powerful papers in London, and the most popular papers as well, were open partisans of the Southern Confederation. In London, to be on the side of the Union was at one time to be eccentric, to be un-English, to be Yankee. On the other hand, most of the great democratic towns of the midland and of the north were mainly in favour of the Union. The artisans everywhere were on the same side. This was made strikingly manifest in Lancashire. The supply of cotton from America nearly ceased in consequence of the war, and the greatest distress prevailed in that county. The 'cotton famine,' called by no exaggerated name, set in. All that private benevolence could do, all that legislation, enabling money to be borrowed for public works to give employment, could do, was for a time hardly able to contend against the distress. Yet the Lancashire operatives were among the sturdiest of those who stood out against any proposal to break the blockade or to recognise the South. Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright, and the Manchester School generally, or at least all that were left of them, were for the North. A small but very influential number of thoughtful men, Mr. John Stuart Mill at their head, were faithful to their principles, and stood firmly by the cause of the Union. But the voice of London, that is the voice of what is called society, and of the metropolitan shopkeeping classes who draw their living from society—all this was for the South. It was not a question of Liberal and Tory. The Tories, on the whole, were more discreet than the Liberals. It was not from the Conservative benches of the House of Commons that the bitterest and least excusable denunciations of the Northern cause and of the American Republic were heard. It was a Liberal who declared with exultation that 'the republican bubble' had burst. It was a Liberal—Mr. Roebuck—who was most clamorous for English intervention to help the South. It was Lord Russell who described the struggle as one in which the North was striving for empire and the South for independence. It was Mr. Gladstone who said that the President of the Southern Confederation—

Mr. Jefferson Davis—had made an army, had made a navy, and, more than that, had made a nation. On the other hand, it is to be remarked that among the Liberals, even of the official class, were to be seen some of the staunchest advocates of the Northern cause. The Duke of Argyll championed the cause from warm sympathy; Sir George Lewis from cool philosophy. Mr. Charles Villiers and Mr. Milner Gibson were frankly and steadily on the side of the North. The Conservative leaders on the whole behaved with great discretion. Mr. Adams wrote, in July 1863, that 'the Opposition leaders are generally disinclined to any demonstrations whatever. Several of them in reality rather sympathise with us. But the body of their party continue animated by the same feelings to America which brought on the Revolution, and which drove us into the war of 1812.' Lord Derby, indeed, expressed his conviction that the Union never could be restored; but Lord Palmerston had done the same. Mr. Disraeli abstained from saying anything that could offend any Northerner, and gave no indication of partisanship on either side. Lord Stanley always spoke like a fair and reasonable man, who understood thoroughly what he was talking about. In this he was, unfortunately, somewhat peculiar among the class to which he belonged. Not many of them appeared precisely to know what they were talking about. They took their opinions for the most part from the *Times* and from the talk of the clubs. The talk of the clubs was that the Southerners were all gentlemen and very nice fellows, who were sure to win; and that the Northerners were low, trading, shopkeeping fellows, who did not know how to fight, were very cowardly, and were certain to be defeated. There was a theory that the Northerners really rather liked slavery and would have it if they could, and that a negro slave in the South was much better off than a free negro in the Northern States. The geography of the question was not very clearly understood in the clubs. Those who endeavoured to show that it was not easy to find a convenient dividing line for two federations on the North American continent were commonly answered that the Mississippi formed exactly the suitable frontier. It was an article of faith with some of those who then most eagerly discussed the question in London, that the Mississippi flowed east and west, and separated neatly the seceding States from the States of the North. The *Times* was the natural instructor of what is called society in London, and the *Times* was, unfortunately, very badly informed all through the war. After the failure of General Lee's attempt to carry invasion into the North and the simultaneous capture of Vicksburg by General Grant, anyone, it might have been thought, who was capable of forming an opinion at all, must have seen that the flood-tide of the rebellion had been reached and was over;

that the South would have to stand on the defensive from that hour, and that the overcoming of its defence, considering the comparative resources of the belligerents, was only a question of time. Yet for a whole year or more the London public were still assured that the Confederates were sweeping from victory to victory; that wherever they seemed even to undergo a check, that was only a part of their superior policy, which would presently vindicate itself in greater victory; that the North was staggering, crippled and exhausted; and that the only doubt was whether General Lee would not at once march for Washington and establish the Southern Government there. Almost to the very hour when the South, its brave and brilliant defence all over, had to confess defeat and yield its broken sword to the conquerers, the London public were still invited to believe that Mr. Davis was floating on the full flood of success. While the hearts of all in Richmond were filled with despair, and the final surrender was accounted there a question of days, the Southern sympathisers in London were complacently bidden to look out for the full triumph and the assured independence of the Southern Confederation. On the last day of December, 1864, the *Times* complained that 'Mr. Seward and other teachers or flatterers of the multitude still affect to anticipate the early restoration of the Union'—and in three months from that date the rebellion was over. Those who read and believed in such instruction—and up to the very last their name was legion—must surely have been bewildered when the news came of the capture of Richmond and the surrender of Lee. They might well have thought that only some miraculous intervention of a malignant fate could thus all at once have converted victory into defeat, and turned the broken worthless levies of Grant and Sherman into armies of conquerors.

In the end the Southern population were as bitter against us as the North. The Southern States fancied themselves deceived. They too had mistaken the unthinking utterances of what is called society in England for the expression of English statemanship and public feeling. It is proper to assert distinctly that at no time had the English Government any thought of acting on the suggestion of the Emperor of the French and recognising the South. Lord Palmerston would not hear of it, nor would Lord Russell. What might have come to pass if the Southern successes had continued a year longer it would be idle now to conjecture; but up to the turning-point our statesmen had not changed, and after the turning-point change was out of the question. There is nothing to blame in the conduct of the English Government throughout all this trying time, except as regards the manner in which they dismissed the remonstrances about the building of the privateers. But it is not likely that impartial history

will acquit them of the charge of having been encouraged in their indifference by the common conviction that the Union was about to be broken up, and that the North was no longer a formidable power.

CHAPTER XLV.

PALMERSTON'S LAST VICTORY.

During the later months of his life the Prince Consort had been busy in preparing for another great International Exhibition to be held in London. It was arranged that this Exhibition should open on May 1, 1862; and although the sudden death of the Prince Consort greatly interfered with the prospects of the undertaking, it was not thought right that there should be any postponement of the opening. The Exhibition building was erected in South Kensington, according to a design by Captain Fowke. It certainly was not a beautiful structure. None of the novel charm which attached to the bright exterior of the Crystal Palace could be found in the South Kensington building. It was a huge and solid erection of brick, with two enormous domes, each in shape so strikingly like the famous crinoline petticoat of the period that people amused themselves by suggesting that the principal idea of the architect was to perpetuate for posterity the shape and structure of the Empress Eugenie's invention. The Fine Arts department of the Exhibition was a splendid collection of pictures and statues. The display of products of all kinds from the Colonies was rich, and was a novelty, for the colonists contributed little indeed to the Exhibition of 1851; and the intervening eleven years had been a period of immense colonial advance. But the public did not enter with much heart into the enterprise of 1862. No one felt any longer any of the hopes which floated dreamily and gracefully round the scheme of 1851. There was no talk or thought of a reign of peace any more. The Civil War was raging in America. The Continent of Europe was trembling all over with the spasms of war just done, and the premonitory symptoms of war to come. The Exhibition of 1862 had to rely upon its intrinsic merits, like any ordinary show or any public market. Poetry and prophecy had nothing to say to it.

England was left for some time to an almost absolute inactivity. As regards measures of political legislation, after the failure of the Reform Bill, it was quite understood, as we have already said, that there was to be no more of Reform while Lord Palmerston lived. At one of his elec-

tions for Tiverton, Lord Palmerston was attacked by a familiar antagonist, a sturdy Radical butcher, and asked to explain why he did not bring in another Reform Bill. The answer was characteristic. 'Why do we not bring in another Reform Bill? Because we are not geese.' Lord Palmerston was heartily glad to be rid of schemes in which he had neither belief nor sympathy; and his absence of political foresight in home affairs made him satisfied that the whole question of Reform was quietly shelved for another generation. It is not, perhaps, surprising that a busy statesman, whose intellect was mostly exercised on questions of foreign policy, should have come to this conclusion, when cool critics on public affairs were ready to adopt with complacency a similar faith. The *Quarterly Review* said, in 1863, 'Reform is no longer talked of now. Mr. Bright has almost ceased to excite antipathy.' 'Our statesmen,' it went on to say with portentous gravity, 'have awakened to the fact that the imagined Reform agitation was nothing but an intrigue among themselves, and that the nation was far too sensible to desire any further approximation to the government of the multitude.' Lord Palmerston was free to indulge in his taste for foreign politics.

Between Palmerston and the Radical party in England there was a growing coldness. He had not only thrown over Reform himself, but he had apparently induced most of his colleagues to accept the understanding that nothing more was to be said about it. He had gone in for a policy of large expenditure for the purpose of securing the country against the possibilities of invasion. He had lent himself openly to the propagation of what his adversaries called, not very unreasonably, the scare that was got up about another Napoleonic invasion. When drawn into argument by Mr. Cobden on the subject, Lord Palmerston had betrayed a warmth of manner that was almost offensive, and had spoken of the commercial treaty with France as if it were a thing rather ridiculous than otherwise. He was unsparing whenever he had a chance in his ridicule of the ballot. He had very little sympathy with the grievances of the Nonconformists, some of them even still real and substantial enough. He took no manner of interest in anything proposed for the political benefit of Ireland. Although an Irish landlord, an Irish peer, and occasionally speaking of himself in a half-jocular way as an Irishman, he could not be brought even to affect any sympathy with any of the complaints made by the representatives of that country. He scoffed at all proposals about tenant-right. 'Tenant-right,' he once said, 'is landlord's wrong;' and he was cheered for saying this by the landlords on both sides of the House of Commons; and he evidently thought he had settled the question. He was indeed impatient of all 'views;' and he regarded what is called philosophic states-

manship with absolute contempt. The truth is that Palmerston ceased to be a statesman the moment he came to deal with domestic interests. When actually in the Home Office and compelled to turn his attention to the business of that department, he proved a very efficient administrator, because of his shrewdness and his energy. But as a rule he had not much to do with English political affairs, and he knew little or nothing of them. He was even childishly ignorant of many things which any ordinary public man is supposed to know. He was at home in foreign—that is, in Continental politics; for he had hardly any knowledge of American affairs, and almost up to the moment of the fall of Richmond was confident that the Union never could be restored, and that separation was the easy and natural way of settling all the dispute. He gave a pension to an absurd and obscure writer of doggrel, and when a question was raised about this singular piece of patronage in the House of Commons, it turned out that Lord Palmerston knew nothing about the man, but had got it into his head somehow that he was a poet of the class of Burns. When he read anything except despatches he read scientific treatises, for he had a keen interest in some branches of science; but he cared little for modern English literature. The world in which he delighted to mingle talked of Continental politics generally, and a great knowledge of English domestic affairs would have been thrown away there. Naturally, therefore, when Lord Palmerston had nothing particular to do in foreign affairs and had to turn his attention to England, he relished the idea of fortifying her against foreign foes. This was foreign politics seen from another point of view; it had far more interest for him than reform or tenant-right.

There were, however, some evidences of a certain difference of opinion between Lord Palmerston and some of his colleagues, as well as between him and the Radical party. His constant activity in foreign politics pleased some of his Cabinet as little as it pleased the advanced Liberals. His vast fortification schemes, and his willingness to spend money on any project that tended towards war, or, what seemed much the same thing, on any elaborate preparation against problematical war, was not congenial with the temperament and the judgment of some members of his Administration. Lord Palmerston acted sincerely on the opinion which he expressed in a short letter to Mr. Cobden, that 'man is a fighting and quarrelling animal.' Assuming it to be the nature of man to fight and quarrel, he could see no better business for English statesmanship than to keep this country always in a condition to resist a possible attack from somebody. He differed almost radically on this point from two at least of his more important colleagues, Mr. Gladstone and Sir George Cornewall Lewis. Mr. Evelyn Ashley, in his 'Life of Lord Palmerston,' has published some interesting

letters that passed between Palmerston and these statesmen on this general subject. Palmerston wrote to Sir George Lewis on November 22, 1860, arguing against something Lewis had said, and which Palmerston hopes 'was only a conversational paradox, and not a deliberately adopted theory.' This was a dissent on the part of Lewis from the maxim, that in statesmanship prevention is better than cure. Each had clearly in his mind the prevention which would take security against the perils of war; Lord Palmerston therefore goes on at once in his letter to show that in many cases the timely adoption of spirited measures by an English Government would have actually prevented war. Lewis argues that 'if an evil is certain and proximate, and can be averted by diplomacy, then undoubtedly prevention is better than cure;' but that 'if the evil is remote and uncertain, then I think it better not to resort to preventive measures, which insure a proximate and certain mischief.' The purpose of the discussion is made more clear in Lewis's concluding sentence: 'It seems to me that our foreign relations are on too vast a scale to render it wise for us to insure systematically against all risks; and if we do not insure systematically, we do nothing.' On April 29, 1862, Lord Palmerston writes to Mr. Gladstone about a speech that the latter had just been making in Manchester, and in which, as Lord Palmerston puts it, Mr. Gladstone seems 'to make it a reproach to the nation at large that it has forced, as you say it has, on the Parliament and the Government the high amount of expenditure which we have at present to provide for.' Palmerston does not 'quite agree' with Mr. Gladstone 'as to the fact;' 'but admitting it to be as you state, it seems to me to be rather a proof of the superior sagacity of the nation than a subject for reproach.' Lord Palmerston goes on to argue that the country, so far from having, as Cobden had accused it of doing, 'rushed headlong into extravagance under the influence of panic,' had simply awakened from a lethargy, got rid of 'an apathetic blindness on the part of the governed and the governors as to the defensive means of the country compared with the offensive means acquired and acquiring by other Powers.' 'We have on the other side of the Channel a people who, say what they may, hate us as a nation from the bottom of their hearts, and would make any sacrifice to inflict a deep humiliation upon England. It is natural that this should be so. They are eminently vain, and their passion is glory in war. They cannot forget or forgive Aboukir, Trafalgar, the Peninsula, Waterloo, and St. Helena. . . . Well, then, at the head of this neighbouring nation, who would like nothing so well as a retaliatory blow upon England, we see an able, active, wary, counsel-keeping but ever-planning sovereign; and we see this sovereign organising an army which, including his reserve, is more than six times greater in amount than

the whole of our regular forces in our two islands, and at the same time labouring hard to create a navy equal, if not superior, to ours. Give him a cause of quarrel, which any foreign Power may at any time invent or create, if so minded; give him the command of the Channel, which permanent or accidental naval superiority might afford him, and then calculate if you can—for it would pass my reckoning power to do so—the disastrous consequences to the British nation which a landing of an army of from one to two hundred thousand men would bring with it. Surely even a large yearly expenditure for army and navy is an economical insurance against such a catastrophe.' The reader will perhaps be reminded of one of the most effective arguments of Demosthenes. Consider, he says, what even a few days of the occupation of the country by a foreign enemy would mean, and then say whether as a mere matter of economy it would not be better to spend a good deal of the resources we have in striving to avert such a calamity. There is a great difference, however, in the purpose and the application of the two arguments. Demosthenes puts the case in a way that is from its point of view perfect. He is speaking of a danger that lies at the gates; of an enemy who must be encountered one way or another; and he is pleading for instant and offensive war. It is a very different thing to argue for enormous expenditure on the ground that somebody who is now professing the most peaceful intentions may possibly one day become your enemy, and try to attack you. In such a case, the first thing to be considered is whether the danger is real and likely to be imminent, or whether it is merely speculative. Even against speculative dangers a wise people will always take precautions; but it is no part of wisdom to spend in guarding against such perils as much as would be needed to enable us actually to speak with the enemy at the gate. It is a question of proportion and comparison. As Sir George Lewis argues, it is not possible for a nation like England to secure herself against all speculative dangers. France might invade us from Boulogne or Cherbourg, no doubt. But the United States might at the same time assail us in Canada. Russia might attack, as she once thought of doing, our Australian possessions, or make an onslaught upon us in Asia. Germany might be in alliance with Russia; Austria might at the same time be in alliance with France. These are all possibilities; they might all come to pass at one and the same time. But how could any State keep fleets and armies capable of ensuring her against serious peril from such a combination? It would be better to make up our minds to wait until the assault really threatened, and then fight it out the best way we could. Lord Palmerston seemed to forget that in the campaign against Russia it did not prove easy for France to send out an army very much smaller than his 'one or two hundred thousand men;'

and that Louis Napoleon was glad to finish up prematurely his campaign in Lombardy, even though he had won in every battle. He had also made the mistake of assuming that all these military and naval insurances must insure. If he had lived to 1870 he would have seen that a Sovereign may engage himself for years in the preparing of an immense armament, that it may be the armament of a people 'eminently vain' and whose 'passion is glory in war,' and yet that the armament may turn out a vast failure, and may prove at the hour of need a defence like Rodomonte's bridge in Ariosto, which only conducts its owner to ignominious upset and fall. All the resources of France were strained for years, and by one who could do as he pleased, for the single purpose of creating a great overmastering army; and when the time came to test the army, it proved to be little better than what Prince Bismarck called 'a crowd of fighting persons.' This is surely a matter to be taken account of when we are thinking of going to vast annual expense for the purpose of maintaining a great armament. We may go to all the expense, and yet not have the armament when we fancy we have need for it. That, Lord Palmerston would doubtless have said, is a risk we must run. Mr. Gladstone and Sir George Lewis would no doubt have thought problematic invasion a risk more safe to run. That had been the view of Sir Robert Peel.

Whatever may be thought of the merits of the argument on either side—and the decision will be made more often probably by temperament than by reasoning—the controversy will serve to illustrate the sort of difference that was gradually growing up between Lord Palmerston and some of his own colleagues. Lord Palmerston had of late fallen again into a policy of suspicion and distrust as regards France. We are convinced that he was perfectly sincere; and, as has been said already in these pages, we do not think there was any inconsistency in his conduct. He had for a long time believed in the good faith of the Emperor of the French; but the policy of the Lombardy campaign, and the consequent annexation of Savoy and Nice, had come on him as a complete surprise, and when he found that his friend Louis Napoleon could keep such secrets from him, he possibly came to the conclusion that he could keep others still more important. Lord Palmerston made England his idol. He loved her in a Pagan way. He did not much care for abstract justice where she was concerned. He was unscrupulous where he believed her interests were to be guarded. Nor had he any other than a purely Pagan view of her interests. It did not seem to have occurred to him that England's truest interest would be to do justice to herself and to other States; to be what Voltaire's Brahmin boasts of being, a good parent and a faithful friend, maintaining well her own children and endeavouring for peace

among her neighbours. Palmerston's idea was that England should hold the commanding place among European States, and that none should even seem to be in a position to do her scathe.

Lord Palmerston's taste for foreign affairs had now ample means of gratification. England had some small troubles of her own to deal with. A serious insurrection sprang up in New Zealand. The tribe of the Waikatos, living near Auckland in the Northern Island, began a movement against the colonists, and this became before long a general rebellion of the Maori natives. The Maoris are a remarkably intelligent race, and are skilful in war as well as in peace. Not long before this the Governor of the colony, Sir George Grey, had written in the warmest praise of their industrial capabilities and their longing for mental improvement. They had a certain literary art among them; they could all, or nearly all, read and write; many of them were eloquent and could display considerable diplomatic skill. They fought so well in this instance that the British troops actually suffered a somewhat serious repulse in endeavouring to take one of the Maori palisado-fortified villages. In the end, however, they were of course defeated. The quarrel was a survival of a long-standing dispute between the colonists and the natives about land. It was, in fact, the old story; the colonists eager to increase their stock of land, and the natives jealous to guard their quickly vanishing possession. The events led to grave discussion in Parliament. The Legislature of New Zealand passed enactments confiscating some nine million acres of the native lands and giving the Colonial Government something like absolute and arbitrary power of arrest and imprisonment. The Government at home proposed to help the colonists by a guarantee to raise a loan of one million to cover the expenses of the war, or the colonial share of them, and this proposal was keenly discussed in the House of Commons. It was on this occasion that Mr. Roebuck laid down a philosophical theory which gave a good deal of offence to sensitive people; the theory that where 'the brown man' and the white meet, the brown man is destined to disappear. The doctrine is questionable enough, even as a theory. No doubt the brown man is destined to disappear if the white man, with his better weapons and greater cleverness and resources, makes it his business to extirpate him; and it was justly pointed out that whatever Mr. Roebuck may have personally meant by his theory, its inculcation at such a moment could only tend to strengthen this idea in the minds of some colonists who were already only too willing to entertain it. But until the brown man has had full fairplay somewhere alongside of the white man, it is rash to come to any distinct conclusions as to his ultimate destiny. Mr. Roebuck always loved

theories neatly cut and sharpened. He gave them out with a precision which lent them an appearance of power and of authority; they seemed to argue a mind that had 'swallowed formulas,' as Mr. Carlyle puts it, and was above the cant of humanitarianism. But such theories are more satisfactorily broached and discussed in scientific societies than in Parliamentary debate. The ultimate destiny of the brown man did not particularly help the House of Commons to any conclusions concerning the New Zealand insurrection, because even Mr. Roebuck did not put forward his theory as an argument to prove that in every controversy we were bound to take the side of the white man and assist him in his predestined business of extinguishing his brown rival. The Government passed their Guarantee Bill, not without many a protest from both sides of the House that colonists who readily engaged in quarrels with natives must some time or other be prepared to bear the expenses entailed by their own policy.

Trouble, too, arose on the Gold Coast of Africa. Some slaves of the King of Ashantee had taken refuge in British territory; the Governor of Cape Coast Colony would not give them up; and in the spring of 1863 the King made threatening demonstrations, invading the territories of neighbouring chiefs, destroying many of their villages, and approaching within forty miles of our frontier. The Governor, assuming that the settlement was about to be invaded by the Ashantees, took it upon him to anticipate the movement by sending an expedition into the territory of the King. He ordered troops to be moved for the purpose; the season was badly chosen; the climate was pestilential; even the black troops from the West Indies could not endure it and began to die like flies. The ill-advised undertaking had to be given up; and the Government at home only escaped a vote of censure by a narrow majority of seven. 226 members supported Sir John Hay's resolution declaring that the movement was rash and impolitic, and 233 sustained the action of the Government. Much discussion, too, was aroused by occurrences in Japan. A British subject, Mr. Richardson, was murdered in the English settlement of Japan and on an open road made free to Englishmen by treaty. This was in September 1862. The murder was committed by some of the followers of Prince Satsuma, one of the powerful feudal princes, who then practically divided the authority of Japan with the regular Government. Reparation was demanded both from the Japanese Government and from Prince Satsuma; the Government paid the sum demanded of them, 100,000*l.*, and made an apology. Prince Satsuma was called on to pay 25,000*l.* and to see that the murderers were brought to punishment, the crime having been committed within

his jurisdiction. Satsuma did nothing, and in 1863 Colonel Neale, the English *Chargé d'Affaires* in Japan, called upon Admiral Kuper to go with the English fleet to Kagosima, Satsuma's capital, and demand satisfaction. Admiral Kuper entered the bay on August 11, 1863, and after waiting for a day or two proceeded to seize on some steamers. The Kagosima Forts opened fire on him, and he then bombarded the town and laid the greater portion of it in ashes. The town, it seemed, was built for the most part of wood; it caught fire in the bombardment and was destroyed. Fortunately the non-combatant inhabitants, the women and children, had had time to get out of Kagosima, and the destruction of life was not great. The whole transaction was severely condemned by many Englishmen who did not belong to the ranks of those professed philanthropists whom it is sometimes the fashion to denounce in England as if humanity and patriotism were irreconcilable qualities, and as if a true Englishman ought to have no consideration for the sufferings and the blood of Japanese and Maoris and people of that sort. The House of Commons, however, sustained the Government by a large majority. The Government, it should be said, did not profess to justify the destruction of Kagosima. Their case was that Admiral Kuper had to do something; that there was nothing he could very well do when he had been fired upon but to bombard the town; and that the burning of the town was an accident of the conflict for which neither he nor they could be held responsible. Satsuma finally submitted and paid the money, and promised justice. But there were more murders and more bombardings yet before we came to anything like an abiding settlement with Japan; and Japan itself was not far off a Revolution, the most sudden, organic, and to all appearance complete that has ever yet been seen in the history of nations.

In the meantime, however, our Government became involved in liabilities more perilous than any disputes in eastern or southern islands could bring on them. An insurrection of a very serious kind broke out in Poland. It was provoked by the Strafford-like thoroughness of the policy adopted by the Russian authorities. It was well known to the Russian Government that a secret political agitation was going on in Poland, and it was determined to anticipate matters and choke off the patriotic movement by taking advantage of the periodical conscription to press into the military ranks all the young men in the cities who could by any possibility be supposed to have any sympathy with it. The attempt to execute this resolve was the occasion for the outbreak of an insurrection which at one time showed something like a claim to success. The young men who could escape fled to the woods, and there formed themselves

into armed bands, which gave the Russians great trouble. The rebels could disperse and come together with such ease and rapidity that it was very difficult indeed to get any real advantage over them. The frontier of Austrian-Poland was very near, and the insurgents could cross it, escape from the Russian troops, and recross it when they pleased to resume their harassing operations. Austria was not by any means so unfriendly to the Polish patriots as both Russia and Prussia were. Austria had come unwillingly into the scheme for the partition of Poland, and had got little profit by it; and it was well understood that if the other Powers concerned could see their way to the restoration of Polish nationality, Austria, for her part, would make no objection. The insurgents counted with some confidence on the passive attitude of the Austrian authorities, and the positive sympathy of many officers and soldiers in the Austrian army. They converted the Austrian frontier for a while into a military basis of operations against Russia. To some extent the same thing was attempted on the Prussian frontier, too; but Prussia was still very much under the dominion of Russia, and was prevailed upon or coerced to execute an odious convention with Russia, by virtue of which the Russian troops were allowed to follow Polish insurgents into Prussian territory. This convention created a strong feeling against Prussia through the whole of Western Europe, and for a while made her much more an object of general dislike than even Russia herself.

It was plain from the first that the Poles could not under the most favourable circumstances hold out long against Russia by virtue of their own strength. It was evident that wherever the insurrection could be got into a corner Russia could crush it with ease. Nevertheless, the plans of the Poles were not so imprudent as they seemed. On the contrary, they had a certain chance of success. The idea, whether clearly and definitely expressed or not, was to keep the insurrection up, by any means and at any risk, until some of the great European Powers should be induced to interfere. The insurrection was a great drama, a piece of deliberate stage-play. We do not say this in any spirit of disparagement; the stage-play was got up by patriots with a true and noble purpose, and it was the only statesmanlike policy left to the Poles. Let us keep it up long enough—such was the conviction of the Polish leaders—and Western Europe must intervene. Despite the lesson of subsequent events, the Poles were well justified in their political calculations. Their hopes were at one time on the very eve of being realised. The Emperor Napoleon was eager to move to their aid, and Lord Russell was hardly less eager.

The Polish cause was very popular in England. It had been the political first love of many a man, who now felt his youthful ardour glow

again as he read of the gallant struggle made in the forests of Poland. Russia was hated; Prussia was now hated even more. There was no question of party feeling about the sympathy with Poland. There were about as many Conservatives as Radicals who were ready to favour the idea of some effort being made in her behalf. Lord Ellenborough spoke up for Poland in the House of Lords with poetic and impassioned eloquence. Lord Shaftesbury from the opposite benches denounced the conduct of Russia. The Irish Catholic was as ardent for Polish liberty as the London artisan. Among its most conspicuous and energetic advocates in England were Mr. Pope Hennessy, a Catholic and Irish member of Parliament; and Mr Edmond Beales, the leader of a great Radical organisation in London. The question was raised in Parliament by Mr. Hennessy, and aroused much sympathy there. Great public meetings were held, at which Russia was denounced and Poland advocated, not merely by popular orators, but by men of high rank and grave responsibility. War was not openly called for at those meetings, or in the House of Commons; but it was urged that England, as one of the Powers which had signed the Treaty of Vienna, should join with other States in summoning Russia to recognise the rights, such as they were, which had been secured to Poland by virtue of that treaty. In France the greatest enthusiasm prevailed for the cause of Poland. The eloquent pen of Montalembert pleaded for the 'nation in mourning.' Prince Napoleon spoke with singular eloquence and impressiveness in the French Senate on the justice and the necessity of intervention. The same cause was pleaded by Count Walewski, himself the son of a Polish lady. The Emperor Napoleon required little pressing. He was ready for intervention if he could get England to join him. Lord Russell went so far as to draw up and despatch to Russia, in concert with France and Austria, a note on the subject of Poland. It urged on the attention of the Russian Government six points, as the outline of a system of pacification for Poland. These were:—a complete amnesty; a national representation; a distinct national administration of Poles for the kingdom of Poland; full liberty of conscience, with the repeal of all the restrictions imposed on Catholic worship; the recognition of the Polish language as official; the establishment of a regular system of recruiting. There was an almost universal impression at one moment that in the event of Russia declining to accept these recommendations, England, Austria, and France would make war to compel her. There was hardly any party in England absolutely opposed to the idea of intervention, except the Manchester School of Radicals. Some of these were consistently opposed to intervention in any foreign cause whatever. Others had an added impression that Poland

had managed her national affairs very badly when she had a chance of managing them for herself, and that therefore there was little use in trying to set her on her feet again. Such opposition would, however, have counted for even less than it did at the time of the Crimean War, if the Government had resolved on going in with France and striking a blow for Poland.

Looking back now calmly on the events of that day, and those which followed them, it does not seem that such a policy would have been unwise. There was much in the claims of Poland which deserved the sympathy of every lover of liberty and believer in the development of civilisation. If this were the time or place for such a discussion, it would not be difficult to show that the faults found with Poland's old system of government had nothing to do with the condition of the present; and that a new Poland would no more be likely to fall into the errors of the past, than a new Irish Parliament would be likely to refuse the right of representation to Catholics. There would assuredly have been a distinct advantage to the stability of European affairs in the resuscitation of Poland as a distinct and independent part of the Russian State system, even if she were not to be a wholly independent nation once again. This probably could not have been done without war; but it seems more than merely probable that that war would have averted the necessity for many other wars which have since been fought out with less profitable result to European stability. Whether the English alarms about the aggressive designs of Russia be founded or unfounded, the legislative independence of Poland would have made it superfluous to take much thought concerning them. The new Poland would undoubtedly have been a State with representative institutions; and set in the midst of Russia and of Prussia, her example could hardly have been without a contagious influence of a very salutary kind on each.

It soon became known, however, that there was to be no intervention. Lord Palmerston put a stop to the whole idea. It was not that he sympathised with Russia. On the contrary, he wrote a letter to Baron Brunnow, the Russian Ambassador, on February 4, 1863, in which he bluntly told him that he regarded the Polish insurrection as the just punishment inflicted by Heaven on Russia for Russia's having done so much to stir up revolution in the dominions of some of her neighbours. But Lord Palmerston had by this time grown into as profound a distrust of the Emperor Napoleon as any representative of the social and democratic Republic could possibly entertain. He was convinced that the Emperor was stirring in the matter chiefly with the hope of getting an opportunity of establishing himself in the Rhine provinces of Prussia, on the pretext

of compelling Prussia to remain neutral in the struggle, or of punishing her if she took the side of Russia. Probably Lord Palmerston was mistaken in this instance. It is not likely that Louis Napoleon ever cared for any war project or annexation scheme except with the view of making his dynasty popular in France; and he may well have thought that the emancipation of Poland would gain him popularity enough to enable him to dispense with other contrivances for the remainder of his reign. However that may be, Lord Palmerston was firm. He described a proposal of the Emperor for an identical note to be addressed to Prussia on the subject of the convention with Russia as a trap laid for England to fall into; and he would have nothing to do with it. After a while it became known that England had decided not to join in any project for armed intervention; and from that moment Russia became merely contemptuous. The Emperor of the French would not and could not take action single-handed; and Prince Gortschakoff politely told Lord Russell that England had really better mind her own business and not encourage movements in Poland which were simply the work of 'cosmopolitan revolution.' Lord Russell had spoken of the responsibility which the Emperor of Russia was incurring; and Prince Gortschakoff drily replied that the Emperor knew all about that and was quite prepared to accept any responsibility. It used to be said at the time that Prince Gortschakoff gently intimated in diplomatic conversation that if the English Government were inclined to occupy themselves in redressing the grievances of injured nationalities they would find in Ireland a legitimate and sufficient object for the exercise of their reforming energies. It is certain that England received a snub, and that Prince Gortschakoff intended his reply to be thus accepted by England and thus interpreted by Europe.

After this Austria found it necessary to secure her frontier line more carefully and not allow it to be made any longer a basis of operations against Russia. The insurrection was flung wholly on its own resources. It was kept up gallantly and desperately for a time; but the end was certain. The Russians carried out their measures of pacification with unflinching hand. Floggings and shootings and hangings were in full vigour. The Russian authorities recognised the equal rights of women by administering the scourge and the rope and the bullet to them as well as to men. Droves of prisoners were sent to Siberia. New steps were taken for denationalising the country and effecting its moral as well as physical subjugation. After a time the words of Marshal Sebastiani's famous announcement in 1831 became applicable once more, and order reigned in Warsaw. The intervention of England had done much the same service for Poland that the interposition of Don Quixote did for the boy whose

master was flogging him. There was, to be sure, a certain difference in the conditions. Don Quixote did intervene practically; and while he remained in sight the master pretended to be forgiving and merciful. It was only when the hero had ridden away that the master grimly tied up the boy again and flogged him worse than ever. In the case of England there was no such show of forbearance. The sufferer was tied up under our very eyes and scourged again, and more fiercely, for the express reason that England had ventured to interfere with an unmeaning and ineffectual remonstrance. We have spoken of that school of Liberals who would not have intervened at all on behalf of Poland or any other nation. Many, perhaps most, persons will refuse to accept their principle. But we can hardly believe there is anyone who will not admit that such a course of policy is wise, manly, and dignified when compared with that which intrudes its intervention just far enough to irritate the oppressor and not far enough to be of the slightest benefit to the oppressed.

The effect of the policy pursued by England in this case was to bring about a certain coldness between the Emperor Napoleon and the English Government. This fact was made apparent some little time after when the dispute between Denmark and the Germanic Confederation came up in relation to the Schleswig-Holstein succession. We need not go very deeply now into the historical bearings of this dispute, which long tormented philologists, jurisconsults, and archæologists as well as statesmen. An irreverent Frenchman once declared that the heavens and the earth shall pass away, but the Schleswig-Holstein question shall not pass away. Practically, however, the Schleswig-Holstein question would seem to have passed away so far as our times are concerned. It was in substance a question of the right of nationalities combined of later years with a dispute of succession. Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg were duchies attached to Denmark. Holstein and Lauenburg were purely German in nationality and only held by the King of Denmark as Duke of Holstein and Lauenburg on much the same tenure as that by virtue of which our kings so long held Hanover. The King of Denmark sat as Duke of Holstein and Lauenburg in the old Germanic Diet which used to hold its meetings in Frankfort, the Diet of the Germanic Confederation which was abolished by the Prussian victory at Sadowa, and which Talleyrand once with grave sarcasm urged not to be precipitate in its decisions. Schleswig was attached more directly to the Danish Crown; but a large proportion of the population, much the larger proportion in the southern districts, were German, and there had long been an agitation going on in Germany about the claims and the rights of Schleswig. One of the claims was that Schleswig and Holstein should be united into one

administrative system, and should be governed independently of the kingdom of Denmark, the King of Denmark to be the ruler of this State as the Emperor of Austria is King of Hungary. There can be no doubt that the heart of the German people was deeply interested in the condition of the Schleswigers and Holsteiners. It was only natural that a great people should have been unwilling to see so many of their countrymen, on the very edge of Germany itself, kept under the rule of the Danish King. The tendency of Denmark always was towards an amalgamation of the Duchies into her own state system. The tendency of the Germans was to regard with extreme jealousy any movement that way, to descry evil purpose in even harmless innovations on the part of Denmark, and to make constant complaint about the tampering of the Danish authorities with the tongue and the rights of the Teutonic populations. In truth the claims of Germany and Denmark were irreconcilable. Put into plain words the dispute was between Denmark which wanted to make the duchies Danish, and Germany which wanted to have them German. The arrangement which bound them up with Denmark was purely diplomatic and artificial. Anyone who would look realities in the face must have seen that some day or other the Germans would carry their point, and that the principle of nationalities would have its way in that case as it had done in so many others.

Suddenly the whole dispute became complicated with a question of succession. The King of Denmark, Frederick VII., died in November 1863, and was succeeded by Christian IX. Prince Frederick of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg, claimed the succession to the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. The late King of Denmark had no direct heir to succeed him, and the succession had been arranged in 1852 by the Great Powers of Europe. The Treaty of London then settled it on Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glucksburg, the father of the Princess of Wales. The settlement, however, was brought about by persuading the Duke of Augustenburg, Prince Frederick's father, heir of Holstein and claimant of Schleswig, to renounce his rights, and now Prince Frederick, the son, disputed in his own case the validity of the renunciation. The previous pretensions of Denmark to encroach on the rights of the German populations in the Duchies, had roused an angry feeling in Germany, and German statesmen were willing to take advantage of any claim and any claimant to dispute the succession of the King of Denmark so far as the Duchies were concerned. The affairs of Prussia were now in the hands of a strong man; one of the strongest men modern times have known. Daring, unscrupulous, and crafty as Cavour, Von Bismarck was even already able to wield a power which had never been

within Cavour's reach. The public intelligence of Europe had not yet recognised the marvellous combination of qualities which was destined to make their owner famous, and to prove a dissolving force in the settled systems of Germany, and indeed of the whole European continent. As yet the general opinion of the world set down Herr von Bismarck as simply a fanatical reactionary, a coarse sort of Metternich, a combination of bully and buffoon. The Schleswig-Holstein Question became, however, a very serious one for Denmark when it was taken up by Von Bismarck. There does not seem the slightest reason to suppose that Bismarck ever had any idea of maintaining the pretensions of the Prince of Augustenburg. Bismarck had always ridiculed them without any affectation of concealment. From first to last the mind of Bismarck was evidently made up that the Duchies should be annexed to Prussia. But for the time the claims of the Augustenburg Prince came in conveniently, and Prussia put on the appearance of giving them her sanction and support. The result of all this was that the Germanic Diet and the King of Denmark could not come to any terms of arrangement; and—to cut preliminaries short and get to what strictly concerns our history—war became certain. The Germanic Diet entrusted the conduct of the war to the hands of Austria and Prussia, who entered into joint agreements for the purpose. The German troops entered, first, Holstein, which under the command of the Diet they had a legal right to do, and then Schleswig, and war began. Denmark, one of the smallest and weakest kingdoms in the world, found herself engaged in conflict with Austria and Prussia combined. The little Danish David had defied two Goliaths to combat at one moment.

Were the Danes and their Sovereign and their Government mad? Not at all. They well knew that they could not hold out alone against the two German Great Powers. But they counted on the help of Europe. Especially they counted on the help of England. For a long time they had got it into their heads that England was pledged to defend them against any assault from the side of Germany. Lord Russell in multitudinous despatches had very often given the Danish Government sound and sensible advice. He had constantly admonished them that they must for their own sakes deal fairly with the German populations. He had urgently recommended them to leave to the Germans and the German Governments no fair ground for complaint. He had never countenanced or encouraged any of the acts which tended to the enforced absorption of German populations into a Danish system He had on the contrary more than once somewhat harshly rebuked the Danish Government for neglect or breach of engagements, and sternly pointed out the certain consequences of such a policy. But he had at the

same time implied that if Denmark took the advice of England, England would not see her wronged. He had at all events declared, that if Denmark did not follow England's advice England would not come to her assistance in case she were attacked by the Germans. Denmark interpreted this as an assurance that if she followed England's counsels she might count on England's protection, and she insisted that she had strictly followed England's counsels for this very reason. When the struggle seemed approaching, Lord Palmerston said some words in the House of Commons at the close of a session, which seemed to convey a distinct assurance that England would defend Denmark in case she should be attacked by the German Powers. On July 23, 1863, he was questioned with reference to the course England intended to pursue in the event of the German Powers pressing too hardly on Denmark, and he then said: 'We are convinced—I am convinced at least—that if any violent attempt were made to overthrow the rights and interfere with the independence of Denmark, those who made the attempt would find in the result that it would not be Denmark alone with which they would have to contend.' These words were afterwards explained as intended to be merely prophetic, and to indicate Lord Palmerston's private belief that in the event of Denmark being invaded, France, or Russia, or some State somewhere, would probably be generous enough to come to the assistance of the Danes. But when the words were spoken, it did not occur to the mind of anyone to interpret them in such a sense. The part of Lord Palmerston's speech which contained them was dealing distinctly and exclusively with the policy of England. It was not supposed that an English Minister could expect to satisfy the House of Commons by merely giving a specimen of his skill in forecasting the probable policy of other States. Everyone believed that Lord Palmerston was answering on behalf of the English Government and the English people.

The Danes counted with confidence on the help of England. They refused to accept the terms which Germany would have imposed. They prepared for war. Public opinion in England was all but unanimous in favour of Denmark. Five out of every six persons were for England's drawing the sword in her cause at once. Five out of every six of the small minority who were against war, were nevertheless in sympathy with the Danes. Many reasons combined to bring about this condition of national feeling. In the first instance very few people knew anything whatever of the merits of the controversy. Even professed politicians hardly understood the question. The general impression was, that it was purely the case of two strong Powers oppressing in wanton and wicked combination a weak but gallant people. Austria was not popular in

England; Prussia was detested. Many Englishmen were angry with her because her Government had made the convention with Russia which has already been mentioned, and because she had a reactionary Minister and a half-despotic King. A large number of persons did not like the Germans they met in the City and in business generally. Some had disagreeable reminiscences of their travels in Prussia, and had been unfavourably impressed by the police systems of Berlin. Moreover it was then an article of faith with most Englishmen that Prussians were miserable fellows who could only smoke and drink beer, and who being unable to fight with any decent adversary, were trying to get a warlike reputation by attacking a very weak Power. *Punch* had a cartoon representing the conventional English soldier and sailor regarding with looks of utter contempt an Austrian and a Prussian, and agreeing that Englishmen ought not to be called on to fight such fellows, but offering to kick them if it were thought desirable. In England at this time, military strength meant the army of the Emperor of the French, and political sagacity was represented by the wisdom of the same Sovereign.

A certain small number of persons in England sympathised with Denmark for another reason. The Prince of Wales had been married to the Princess Alexandra on March 10, 1863. The Princess Alexandra was, as it has been already said, the daughter of the King of Denmark. She was not a Dane, except as we may, if we like, call the Emperor of Brazil a Brazilian. But her family had now come to rule in Denmark, and she became in that sense a Danish princess. Her youth, her beauty, her goodness, her sweet and winning ways, had made her more popular than any foreign princess ever before was known to be in England. It seemed even to some who ought to have had more judgment that the virtues and charms of the Princess Alexandra, and the fact that she was now Princess of Wales, supplied ample proof of the justice of the Danish cause, and of the duty of England to support it in arms. Not small, therefore, was the disappointment spread over the country when it was found that the Danes were left alone to their defence, and that England was not to put out a hand to help them.

Yet it was as impossible as it would have been absurd for England to maintain in arms the cause of Denmark. To begin with, the cause was not one which England could reasonably have supported. The artificial arrangements by which the Duchies were bound to Denmark could not endure. They were the device of an era and a system of policy from which England was escaping as fast as she could. It was not a controversy which specially concerned the English people. England was only one of the parties to the diplomatic arrangements which had bound up

the Duchies and the Danish kingdom together. Lord Russell was willing at one moment to intervene by arms in support of Denmark if France would join with England, and he made a proposal of this kind to the French Government. The Emperor Napoleon refused to interfere. He had been hurt by England's refusal to join with him in sustaining Poland against Russia, and now was his time to make a return. Besides, he had, after the attempt at diplomatic intervention between Poland and Russia, issued invitations for a Congress of European sovereigns to assemble in Paris and make a new settlement of Europe. The Governments to which the invitation was addressed had, for the most part, returned a civil acceptance, well knowing the project would come to nothing. Lord Russell refused to have anything to do with the Congress, and gave some excellent reasons for the refusal. The Emperor Napoleon was somewhat hurt by the chill common sense of Lord Russell's reply. The Emperor's invitation was evidently meant to be a document of historical and monumental interest. It was drawn up in the spirit of what Burke calls 'a proud humility.' It made allusion to the early misfortunes and exile of the writer, and put him forward as the one sovereign of Europe on whose face the winds of adversity had severely blown. It must have been painful to find that so much eloquence and emotion had been put into a State paper for nothing. The Emperor's turn had now come, and he would not join with England in sustaining the cause of Denmark. There was absolutely nothing for it but to leave the Danes to fight out their battle in the best way they could. Lord Palmerston put the matter very plainly in a letter to Lord Russell. 'The truth is,' he wrote, 'that to enter into a military conflict with all Germany on Continental ground would be a serious undertaking. If Sweden and Denmark were actively co-operating with us, our 20,000 men might do a great deal; but Austria and Prussia could bring 200,000 or 300,000 into the field, and would be joined by the smaller German States.' At a later period of the struggle Lord Palmerston spoke with full frankness to Count Apponyi, the Austrian Ambassador. He explained that the English Government had 'abstained from taking the field in defence of Denmark, for many reasons—from the season of the year, from the smallness of our army, and the great risk of failure in a struggle with all Germany by land.' But Lord Palmerston pointed out that 'with regard to operations by sea, the positions would be reversed. We are strong, Germany is weak; and the German ports in the Baltic, North Sea, and Adriatic, would be greatly at our command.' Therefore Lord Palmerston warned the Austrian Ambassador that a collision between England and Austria might happen if an Austrian squadron were to

enter the Baltic in order to help the operations against Denmark. The Austrian Ambassador explained that his Government did not intend to send a squadron into the Baltic. This was an unofficial conversation between Palmerston and Count Apponyi, and had no effect on the fortunes of the war or on the diplomacy that brought it to an end.

The Danes fought with a great deal of spirit; but they were extravagantly outnumbered, and their weapons were miserably unfit to contend against their powerful enemies. The Prussian needle-gun came into play with terrible effect in the campaign, and it soon made all attempts at resistance on the part of the Danes utterly hopeless. The Danes lost their ground and their fortresses. They won one little fight on the sea, defeating some Austrian vessels in the German Ocean off Heligoland. The news was received with wild enthusiasm in England. Its announcement in the House of Commons drew down the unwonted manifestation of a round of applause from the Strangers' Gallery. But the struggle had ceased to be anything like a serious campaign. The English Government kept up active negotiations on behalf of peace, and at length succeeded in inducing the belligerents to agree to a suspension of arms, in order that a Conference of the Great Powers might be held in London. The Conference was called together. The populations of the Duchies about whom the whole dispute had taken place, were beginning now to suspect that their claims to independent existence would very probably be overlooked altogether, and that they were only about to be passed from one ruler to another. They sent a deputation to London, and claimed to be represented directly at the Conference. Their claim was rejected. They, the very people whose national existence was the question in dispute, were informed that diplomacy made no account of them. They had no right to a voice, or even to a hearing, in the councils which were to dispose of their destinies. The Saxon minister, Count Beust, who afterwards transferred his abilities and energies to the service of Austria, did the best he could for them, and acted so far as lay in his power as the representative of their claims; but they were not allowed any acknowledged representation at the Conference. The deliberations of the Conference came to nothing. Curiously enough the final rejection of all compromise came from the Danes. Whether they had still some lingering hope that by prolonging the war they could induce some Great Power to intervene on their behalf, or whether they were merely influenced by the doggedness of sheer desperation, we cannot pretend to know. But they proved suddenly obstinate; at the last hour they rejected a proposal which Lord Palmerston described as reasonable in itself, and the Conference came to an end. The war broke out again. The renewed hostilities lasted, however, but a short time. It was plain now even

to the Danes themselves that they could not hold their ground alone, and that no one was coming to help them. The Danish Government sent Prince John of Denmark direct to Berlin to negotiate for peace—they had had enough, perhaps, of foreign diplomatic intervention—and terms of peace were easily arranged. Nothing could be more simple. Denmark gave up everything she had been fighting for, and agreed to bear part of the expense which had been entailed upon the German Powers by the task of chastising her. The Duchies were surrendered to the disposal of the Allies, and nothing more was heard of the claims of the heir of Augustenburg. That claimant only got what is called in homely language the cold shoulder when he endeavoured to draw the attention of the Herr von Bismarck to his alleged right of succession. A new war was to settle the ownership of the Duchies, and some much graver questions of German interest at the same time.

It was obviously impossible that the conduct of the English Government should pass unchallenged. They were quite right, as it seems to us, in not intervening on behalf of Denmark; but they were not right in giving Denmark the least reason to believe that they ever would intervene in her behalf. It would have been a calamity if England had succeeded in persuading Louis Napoleon to join her in a war to enable Denmark to keep the Duchies; it could not be to the credit of England that her Ministers had invited Louis Napoleon to join them in such a policy and had been refused. We cannot see any way of defending Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell against some sort of censure for the part they had taken in this transaction. It would have been a discredit to England if she had become the means of coercing the Duchies into subjection to Denmark, supposing such a thing possible in the long run; but her Ministers could claim no credit for not having done so. They would have done it if they could. They had thus given Europe full evidence at once of their desire and their incapacity. Their political opponents could not be expected to overlook such a chance of attack. Accordingly, in the two Houses of Parliament notices were given of a vote of censure on the Government. Lord Malmesbury, in Lord Derby's absence, proposed the resolution in the House of Lords, and it was carried by a majority of nine. The Government made little account of that; the Lords always had a Tory majority. As Lord Palmerston himself had put it on a former occasion, the Government knew when they took office that their opponents had a larger pack of cards in the Lords than they had, and that whenever the cards came to be all dealt out the Opposition pack must show the greater number. In the House of Commons, however, the matter was much more serious. On July 4, 1864, Mr. Disraeli himself moved the resolution condemning the

conduct of the Government. The resolution invited the House to express its regret that 'while the course pursued by her Majesty's Government has failed to maintain their avowed policy of upholding the integrity and independence of Denmark, it has lowered the just influence of this country in the capitals of Europe, and thereby diminished the securities for peace.' Mr. Disraeli's speech was ingenious and telling. He had a case which even a far less capable rhetorician than he must have made impressive; but he contrived more than once by sheer dexterity to make it unexpectedly stronger against the Government. Thus, for example, he went on during part of his opening observations to compare the policy of England and of France. He proceeded to show that France was just as much bound by the Treaty of Vienna, by the London Convention, by all the agreements affecting the integrity of Denmark, as England herself. Some of the Ministry sitting just opposite the orator caught at this argument as if it were an admission telling against Mr. Disraeli's case. They met his words with loud and emphatic cheers. The cheers meant to say, 'Just so; France was responsible for the integrity of Denmark as much as England; why, then, do you find fault with us?' This was precisely what Mr. Disraeli wanted. Perhaps he had deliberately led up to this very point. Perhaps he had purposely allured his opponents on into the belief that he was making an admission in order to draw from some of them some note of triumph. He seized his opportunity now and turned upon his antagonists at once. 'Yes,' he exclaimed, 'France is equally responsible; and how comes it then that the position of France in relation to Denmark is so free from embarrassment and so dignified; that no word of blame is uttered anywhere in Europe against France for what she has done in regard to Denmark, while your position is one of infinite perplexity, while you are everywhere accused and unable to defend yourselves? How could this be but because of some fatal mistake, some terrible mismanagement?' In truth it was not difficult for Mr. Disraeli to show mistakes in abundance. No sophist could have undertaken to defend all that Ministers had done. Such a defence would involve sundry paradoxes; for they had in some instances done the very thing to-day which they had declared the day before it would be impossible for them to do.

The Government did not make any serious attempt to justify all they had done. They were glad to seize upon the opportunity offered by an amendment which Mr. Kinglake proposed, and which merely declared the satisfaction with which the House had learned 'that at this conjuncture her Majesty had been advised to abstain from armed interference in the war now going on between Denmark and the German Powers.' This amendment, it will be seen at once, did not meet the accusations raised by

Mr. Disraeli. It did not say whether the Ministry had or had not failed to maintain their avowed policy of upholding the integrity and independence of Denmark; or whether their conduct had or had not lowered the just influence of England in the capitals of Europe, and thereby diminished the securities for peace. It gave the go-by to such inconvenient questions, and simply asserted that the House was, at all events, glad to hear there was to be no interference in the war. Many doubted at first whether the Government would condescend to adopt Mr. Kinglake's amendment, or whether they would venture upon a distinct justification of their conduct. Lord Palmerston, however, had an essentially practical way of looking at every question. He was of O'Connell's opinion that, after all, the verdict is the thing. He knew he could not get the verdict on the particular issues raised by Mr. Disraeli, but he was in good hope that he could get it on the policy of his administration generally. The Government therefore adopted Mr. Kinglake's amendment. Still the controversy was full of danger to Lord Palmerston. The advanced Liberals disliked him strongly for his lavish expenditure in fortification schemes, and for the manner in which he had thrown over the Reform Bill. They were not coerced, morally or otherwise, to support him merely because he had not gone into the war against Germany; for no responsible voice from the Opposition had said that the Conservatives, if in office, would have adopted a policy of intervention. On the contrary, it was from Lord Stanley that there came during the debate the most unwarlike sentiment uttered during the whole controversy. Lord Stanley bluntly declared that 'to engage in a European war for the sake of these Duchies would be an act, not of impolicy, but of insanity.' There were members of the Peace Society itself probably who would have hesitated before adopting this view of the duties of a nation. If war be permissible at all, they might have doubted whether the oppression of a small people is not as fair a ground of warlike intervention as the grievance of a numerous population. When, however, such sentiments came from a leader of the party proposing the vote of censure, it is clear that the men who were for non-intervention as a principle were left free to vote on one side or the other as they pleased. Mr. Disraeli did not want to pledge them to warlike action any more than Lord Palmerston. Many of them would, perhaps, rather have voted with Mr. Disraeli than with Lord Palmerston if they could see their way fairly to such a course; and on the votes of even a few of them the result of the debate depended. They held the fate of Lord Palmerston's Ministry in the hollow of their hand.

Lord Palmerston seems to have decided the question for them. His speech closing the debate was a masterpiece not of eloquence, not of

political argument, but of practical Parliamentary tactics. He spoke, as was his fashion, without the aid of a single note. It was a wonderful spectacle that of the man of eighty, thus in the growing morning pouring out his unbroken stream of easy effective eloquence. He dropped the particular questions connected with the vote of censure almost immediately, and went into a long review of the whole policy of his administration. He spoke as if the resolution before the House were a proposal to impeach the Government for the entire course of their domestic policy. He passed in triumphant review all the splendid feats which Mr. Gladstone had accomplished in the reduction of taxation; he took credit for the commercial treaty with France, and for other achievements in which at the time of their accomplishment he had hardly even affected to feel any interest. He spoke directly at the economical Liberals; the men who were for sound finance and freedom of international commerce. The regular Opposition, as he well knew, would vote against him; the regular supporters of the Ministry would vote for him. Nothing could alter the course to be taken by either of these parties. The advanced Liberals, the men whom possibly Palmerston in his heart rather despised as calculators and economists,—these might be affected one way or the other by the manner in which he addressed himself to the debate. To these and at these he spoke. He knew that Mr. Gladstone was the one leading man in the Ministry whom they regarded with full trust and admiration, and on Mr. Gladstone's exploits he virtually rested his case. His speech said in plain words: 'If you vote for this resolution proposed by Mr. Disraeli you turn Mr. Gladstone out of office; you give the Tories, who understand nothing about Free Trade and who opposed the French Commercial Treaty, an opportunity of marring all that he has made.' Some of Lord Palmerston's audience were a little impatient now and then. 'What has all this to do with the question before the House?' was murmured from more than one bench. It had everything to do with the question that was really before the House. That question was, 'Shall Palmerston remain in office, or shall he go out and the Tories come in?' The advanced Liberals had the decision put into their hands. As Lord Palmerston reviewed the financial and commercial history of his administration, they felt themselves morally coerced to support the Ministry which had done so much for the policy that was especially the offspring of their inspiration. When the division was taken it was found that there were 295 votes for Mr. Disraeli's resolution and 313 for the amendment. Lord Palmerston was saved by a majority of eighteen. It was not a very brilliant victory. There were not many votes to spare. But it was a victory. The Conservative miss by a foot was as good for Lord Palmerston as a miss by

a mile. It gave him a secure tenure of office for the rest of his life. Such as it was, the victory was won mainly by his own skill, energy, and astuteness, by the ready manner in which he evaded the question actually in debate, and rested his claim to acquittal on services which no one proposed to disparage. The conclusion was thoroughly illogical, thoroughly practical, thoroughly English. Lord Palmerston knew his time, his opportunity, and his men.

That was the last great speech made by Lord Palmerston. That was the last great occasion on which he was called upon to address the House of Commons. The effort was worthy of the emergency, and, at least in an artistic sense, deserved success. The speech exactly served its purpose. It had no brilliant passages. It had no hint of an elevated thought. It did not trouble itself with any profession of exalted purpose or principle. It did not contain a single sentence which anyone could care to remember after the emergency had passed away. But it did for Lord Palmerston what great eloquence might have failed to do; what a great orator by virtue of his very genius and oratorical instincts might only have marred. It took captive the wavering minds, and it carried the division.

CHAPTER XLVI.

EBB AND FLOW.

One cannot study English politics, even in the most superficial way, without being struck by the singular regularity with which they are governed by the law of action and reaction. The succession of ebb and flow in the tides is not more regular and more certain. A season of political energy is sure to come after a season of political apathy. After the sleeping comes the waking; after the day of work, the night of repose. A liberal spirit is abroad and active; it carries all before it for a while; it pushes great reforms through; it projects others still greater. Suddenly a pause comes; and a whisper is heard that we have had too much of Reform; and the whisper grows into a loud remonstrance, and the remonstrance into what seems to be an almost universal declaration. Then sets in a period of reaction, during which Reform is denounced as if it were a treason, and shuddered at as though it were a pestilence. For a season people make themselves comfortable, and say to each other that England has attained political perfection; that only fools and traitors

would ask her to venture on any further change, and that we are all going now to have a contented rest. Just as this condition of things seems to have become a settled habit and state of existence, the new reaction begins; and before men can well note the change, the country is in the fervour of a Reform fit again. It is so in our foreign policy. We seem to have settled down to a Washingtonian principle of absolute isolation from the concerns and complications of foreign countries, until suddenly we become aware of a rising sea of reaction, and almost in a moment we are in the thick of a policy which involves itself in the affairs of every state from Finland to Sicily, and from Japan to the Caspian Sea. It is the same with our Colonies. We are just on the eve of a blunt and cool dismissal of them from all dependence on us, when suddenly we find out that they are the strength of our limbs and the light of our eyes, and that to live without them would be only death in life; and for another season the patriotism of public men consists in professions of unalterable attachment to the Colonies. It is so with regard to warlike purpose and peaceful purpose; with regard to armaments, fortifications, law reform, everything. An ordinary observer ought to be able almost always to forecast the weather of the coming season in English politics. When action has run its course pretty nearly, reaction is sure; and it ought not to be very difficult to foresee when the one has had its season and the other is to succeed.

The explanation of this phenomenon is not to be found in the fact that the people of these countries are, as Mr. Carlyle says, 'mostly fools.' They do not all thus change their opinions in sudden mechanical springs of alternation. The explanation is not to be sought in any change of national opinion at all, but rather in a change in the ascendency between two tolerably well-balanced parties in politics and thought. The people of these countries, or perhaps it should be said of England especially, are born into Liberalism and Conservatism. In Ireland and in Scotland the condition of things is modified by other facts, and the same general rule will hardly apply; but in England this is, roughly speaking, the law of life. Men as a rule remain in the political condition—we can hardly speak of the political convictions—to which they were born. But the majority give themselves little trouble about the matter. If there is a great stir made by those just above them in politics, and to whom they look up, they will take some interest, and will exhibit it in any desirable way; but they do not move of themselves, and when their leaders appear to acquiesce in anything for a season they withdraw their attention altogether. Many a man is hardly conscious of whether he is Liberal or Conservative until he gets into a crowd somewhere, and hears his

neighbours shouting. Then he shouts with those whom he knows to be of the opinions he is understood to hold, and he shouts himself into political conviction. This is the condition of the majority on both sides. It takes immense trouble on the part of the leaders to rouse the mass of their followers into a condition of genuine activity. The majority are like some of the heavy-winged insects who hardly ever use their wings, and who when for some reason they are anxious to hoist themselves into the air, may be seen of a summer twilight making their preparation so long and slowly that a passing observer would never suppose they meant any such unwonted movement as a flight. The political leaders, and the followers immediately within hearing of their voices, have for the most part the direction of affairs in their hands—these and the newspapers. The leaders, the House of Commons, and the active local men in cities and boroughs—these and the newspapers make up what we commonly understand to be public opinion. The change in public opinion, or what seems to be such, is when one set succeeds for a time in getting predominance over the other. The predominance is usually transferred when one set has done or said all it is quite prepared to do or say for the moment. Then the other, having lost patience or gained courage, rushes in and gets his turn. It is like a contest in some burlesque eclogue, in which each singer has his chance only when the rival is out of breath, and he can strike in and keep singing until he too feels his lungs fail him and has to give way. The Liberals are in power, and they carry some measures by the strength of their parliamentary majority. The moment comes when they go further than the patience of their opponents will bear, or when they have nothing more to suggest at the moment. In either case the managers of the Opposition arouse themselves; and they say, 'We cannot endure any more of this;' or they ask each other why they have endured so much. They stir up their whole party with all the energy they can muster, and at last, after tremendous effort, they get their shard-borne beetle hoisted for his drowsy flight. The others have sunk into comparative languor. They have done what they wanted to do; they have, according to the French phrase, exhausted their mandate; and there is nothing by which they can call the whole strength of their party into action. They do not any longer see their way as well as their opponents do. They are not so angry or so resolute. Perhaps they think they have gone a little too far. The Conservative newspapers are all astir and aflame. The Conservative passion is roused. The Conservative lungs are fresh and strong; their rivals are out of breath. In a word, the Conservatives get what American politicians call 'the floor;' and this is Conservative

reaction. All the time it is probable that not one man in every ten thousand of the population has really changed his opinion. The Conservatives hold their place for a certain time until their opponents have recovered their energies, and have lost their patience; until their passion to attack is more thorough and genuine than the power of the men in possession to resist. Then the Liberal beetle is got upon his wings, and Liberalism has its time again.

During all these changes, however, the Liberal movement is necessarily gaining ground. Reaction in English politics never now goes the length of undoing what has been done. It only interposes a delay, and a warning against moving too far and too fast in the same direction. Therefore, after each flux and reflux it is a matter of practical necessity that the cause which means movement of some kind must be found to have gained upon the cause which would prefer to stand still. It is almost needless to say that the Liberal party have not always been the actual means of carrying a liberal movement. All great Conservative leaders have recognised in good time the necessity of accepting some principle of Reform. In a practical country like England, the Conservatives could not maintain a party of any kind if it were absolutely certain that their mission was to oppose every reform, and the mission of the Liberals to promote it. As a principle, the business of Liberalism is to cry 'forwards;' that of Conservatism to cry 'back.' The action and reaction of which we speak is that of Liberalism and Conservatism; not of the leaders of Liberal and Tory Administrations.

The movement of reaction against Reform in domestic policy was in full force during the earlier years of Lord Palmerston's Government. In home politics, and where finance and commercial legislation were not concerned, Palmerston was a Conservative Minister. He was probably on the whole more highly esteemed among the rank and file of the Opposition in the House of Commons than by the rank and file on his own side. Not a few of the Conservative country gentlemen would in their hearts have been glad if he could have remained Prime Minister for ever. His thoroughly English ways appealed directly to their sympathies. His instincts went with theirs. They liked his courage and his animal spirits. He was always ready to fling cheery defiance in the face of any foreign foe; just as they had been taught to believe that their grandfathers used to fling defiance in the face of Bonaparte and France. He was a faithful member of the Church of England, but his certainly was not an austere Protestantism, and he allowed religion to come no further into the affairs of ordinary life than suited a country gentleman's ideas of the fitness of things. There was among Tory country gentlemen also a

certain doubt or dread as to the manner in which eccentric and exoteric genius might manage the affairs of England when the Conservatives came to have a government of their own, and when Lord Derby could no longer take command. These, therefore, all liked Palmerston, and helped by their favour to swell the sails of his popularity. Many of those who voted, with their characteristic fidelity to party, for Mr. Disraeli's resolution of censure, were glad in their hearts that Lord Palmerston came safely out of the difficulty.

But as the years went on there were manifest signs of the coming and inevitable reaction. One of the most striking of these indications was found in the position taken by Mr. Gladstone. For some time Mr. Gladstone had been more and more distinctly identifying himself with the opinions of the advanced Liberals. The advanced Liberals themselves were of two sections or fractions, working together almost always, but very distinct in complexion ; and it was Mr. Gladstone's fortune to be drawn by his sympathies to both alike. He was of course drawn towards the Manchester School by his economic views; by his agreement with them on all subjects relating to finance and to freedom of commerce. But the Manchester Liberals were for non-intervention in foreign politics; and they carried this into their sympathies as well as into their principles. They had never shown much interest in the struggles of other nations for political liberty. They did not seem to think it was the business of Englishmen to make demonstrations about Italians, or Poles, or French Republicans. The other section of the advanced Liberals were sometimes even flightily eager in their sympathies with the Liberal movements of the Continent. Mr. Gladstone was in communion with the movements of foreign Liberals, as he was with those of English Free-traders and economists. He was therefore qualified to stand between both sections of the advanced Liberals of England, and give one hand to each. During the debates on Italian questions of 1860 and 1861 he had identified himself with the cause of Italian unity and independence.

In the year 1864 Garibaldi came on a visit to England, and was received in London with an outburst of enthusiasm, the like whereof had not been seen since Kossuth first passed down Cheapside, and which perhaps was not seen even then. It was curious to notice how men of opposing parties were gradually swept or sucked into this whirlpool of enthusiasm, and how aristocracy and fashion, which had always held aloof from Kossuth, soon crowded round Garibaldi. At first the leading men of nearly all parties held aloof except Mr. Gladstone. He was among the very first and most cordial in his welcome to Garibaldi. Then the Liberal leaders in general thought they had better consult for their popularity by

taking Garibaldi up. A lady of high rank and great political influence frankly expressed her opinion that Garibaldi was nothing more than a respectable brigand, but she joined in doing public honour to him nevertheless, acknowledging that it would be inconvenient for her husband to keep aloof and risk his popularity. Then the Conservative leaders too began to think it would never do for them to hold back when the prospect of a general election was so closely overshadowing them, and they plunged into the Garibaldi welcome. Men of the class of Lord Palmerston cared nothing for Garibaldi. Men like Lord Derby disliked and despised him; but the crowd ran after him, and the leaders on both sides, after having looked on for a moment with contempt, and another moment with amazement, fairly pulled off their hats and ran with the crowd, shouting and hallooing like the rest. The peerage then rushed at Garibaldi. He was beset by dukes, mobbed by countesses. He could not, by any possibility, have so divided his day as to find time for accepting half the invitations of the noble and new friends who fought and scrambled for him. It was a perpetual trouble to his secretaries and his private friends to decide between the rival claims of a prince of the blood and a prime minister, an archbishop and a duchess, the Lord Chancellor and the leader of the Opposition. The Tories positively outdid the Liberals in the competition. The crowd in the streets were perfectly sincere, some acclaiming Garibaldi because they had a vague knowledge that he had done brave deeds somewhere, and represented a cause; others, perhaps the majority, because they assumed that he was somehow opposed to the Pope. The leaders of society were for the most part not sincere. Three out of every four of them had always previously spoken of Garibaldi—when they spoke of him at all—as a mere buccaneer and filibuster. The whole thing ended in a quarrel between the aristocracy and the democracy; and Garibaldi was got back to his island somehow. Had he ever returned to England he would probably have found himself unembarrassed by the attentions of the Windsor uniform and the Order of the Garter. The whole episode was not one to fill the soul of an unconcerned spectator with great respect for the manner in which crowds and leaders sometimes act in England. Mr. Gladstone was one of the few among the leaders who were undoubtedly sincere, and the course he took made him a great favourite with the advanced Radicals.

Mr. Gladstone had given other indications of a distinct tendency to pass over altogether from Conservatism, and even from Peelism, into the ranks of the Radical Reformers. On May 11, 1864, Mr. Baines brought on a motion in the House of Commons for the reduction of the borough franchise from 10*l.* rental to 6*l.* During the debate that followed Mr.

Gladstone made a remarkable declaration. He contended that the burden of proof rested upon those 'who would exclude forty-nine fiftieths of the working classes from the franchise;' 'it is for them to show the unworthiness, the incapacity, and the misconduct of the working class.' 'I say,' he repeated, 'that every man who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or political danger, is morally entitled to come within the pale of the constitution.' The bill was rejected, as everyone knew it would be. A franchise bill introduced by a private member on a Wednesday is not supposed to have much prospect of success. But the speech of Mr. Gladstone gave an importance to the debate and to the occasion which it would not be easy to overrate. The position taken up by all Conservative minds, no matter to which side of politics their owners belonged, had been that the claim must be made out for those seeking an extension of the suffrage in their favour; that they must show imperative public need, immense and clear national and political advantage, to justify the concession; that the mere fact of their desire and fitness for the franchise ought not to count for anything in the consideration. Mr. Gladstone's way of looking at the question created enthusiasm on the one side—consternation and anger on the other. This was the principle of Rousseau's 'Social Contract,' many voices exclaimed; the principle of the rights of man; the red republic; the social and democratic revolution; anything, everything that is subversive and anarchical. Early in the following session there was a motion introduced by Mr. Dillwyn, a staunch and persevering Reformer, declaring that the position of the Irish State Church was unsatisfactory, and called for the early attention of Her Majesty's Government. Mr. Gladstone spoke on the motion, and drew a contrast between the State Church of England and that of Ireland, pointing out that the Irish Church ministered only to the religious wants of one-eighth or one-ninth of the community amid which it was established. In reply to a letter of remonstrance Mr. Gladstone explained, not long after, that he had not recommended any particular action as a consequence of Mr. Dillwyn's resolution, regarding the question as yet 'remote and apparently out of all bearing on the practical politics of the day.' It was evident, however, that his mind would be found to be made up at any time when the question should become practical, and it was highly probable that his own speech had greatly hastened the coming of that time. The eyes of all Radical Reformers, therefore, turned to Mr. Gladstone as the future Minister of Reform in Church and State. He became from the same moment an object of distrust, and something approaching to detestation, in the eyes of all steady-going Conservatives.

Meanwhile there were many changes taking place in the social and political life of England. Many eminent men passed away during the years that Lord Palmerston held his almost absolute sway over the House of Commons. One man we may mention in the first instance, although he was no politician, and his death in no wise affected the prospects of parties. The attention of the English people was called from questions of foreign policy and of possible intervention in the Danish quarrel, by an event which happened on the Christmas eve of 1863. That day it became known throughout London that the author of 'Vanity Fair' was dead. Mr. Thackeray died suddenly at the house in Kensington which he had lately had built for him in the fashion of that Queen Anne period which he loved and had illustrated so admirably. He was still in the very prime of life; no one had expected that his career was so soon to close. It had not been in any sense a long career. Success had come somewhat late to him, and he was left but a short time to enjoy it. We have already spoken of his works and his literary character. Since the publication of 'The Newcomes,' he had not added to his reputation; indeed it hardly needed any addition. He had established himself in the very foremost rank of English novelists; with Fielding and Goldsmith and Miss Austen and Dickens. He had been a literary man and hardly anything else; having had little to do with politics or political journalism. Once indeed he was seized with a sudden ambition to take a seat in the House of Commons, and at the general election of 1857 he offered himself as a candidate for the city of Oxford in opposition to Mr. Cardwell. He was not elected; and he seemed to accept failure cheerfully as a hint that he had better keep to literary work for the future. He would go back to his author's desk, he said good-humouredly; and he kept his word. It is not likely that he would have been a parliamentary success. He had no gift of speech and had but little interest in the details of party politics. His political views were sentiments rather than opinions. Most of his admirers would probably have been sorry to see him involved in the partisan debates of the House of Commons, where any practised official trained to glibness or any overbearing declaimer would have been far more than a match for him, and where he had no special need or call to go. It is not true that success in Parliament is incompatible with literary distinction. Macaulay and Grote, and two of Thackeray's own craft, Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Lytton, may be called as recent witnesses to disprove that common impression. But these were men who had a distinctly political object, or who loved political life, and were only following their star when they sought seats in the House of Commons. Thackeray had no such vocation and would have been as much out of place in Parliamentary debate as a

painter or a musician. He had no need to covet Parliamentary reputation. As it was well said when the news of his defeat at Oxford reached London, the Houses of Lords and Commons together could not have produced 'Barry Lyndon' and 'Pendennis.' His early death was a source not only of national but of world-wide regret. It eclipsed the Christmas gaiety of nations. Thackeray was as much admired and appreciated in America as in England. Mr. Russell, the correspondent of the *Times*, has given an amusing account of a Southern Confederate leader engaged in an attempt to run the Northern blockade, who kept talking all the time and even at the most exciting and perilous moments, about the various characters in Thackeray's novels. If Thackeray died too soon, it was only too soon for his family and his friends. His fame was secure. He could hardly with any length of years have added a cubit to his literary stature.

A whole group of statesmen had passed prematurely away. Sir James Graham had died after several years of a quiet career; still a celebrity in the House of Commons, but not much in the memory of the public outside it. One of his latest speeches in Parliament was on the Chinese war of 1860. On the last day of the session of 1861, and when almost all the other members had left the House, he remained for a while talking with a friend and former colleague, and as they were separating, Sir James Graham expressed a cheery hope that they should meet on the first day of the next session in the same place. But Graham died in the following October. Sidney Herbert had died a few weeks before in the same year. Sidney Herbert had been raised to the peerage as Lord Herbert of Lea. He had entered the House of Lords because his breaking health rendered it impossible to stand the wear and tear of life in the Commons, and he loved politics and public affairs, and could not be induced to renounce them and live in quiet. He was a man of great gifts, and was looked upon as a prospective Prime Minister. He had a graceful and gracious bearing; he was an able administrator, and a very skilful and persuasive debater. His style of speaking was what might be called, if it is lawful to coin an expression for the purpose, the 'pointed-conversational.' He never declaimed; never even tried to be what is commonly called eloquent; but his sentences came out with a singularly expressive combination of force and ease, every argument telling, every stroke having the lightness of an Eastern champion's sword-play. He had high social station, and was in every way fitted to stand at the head of English public affairs. He was but fifty-one years of age when he died. The country for some time looked on Sir George Lewis as a man likely to lead an administration; but he too passed away before his natural time. He died two years after Sir James Graham and Sidney Herbert, and was only some fifty-seven

years old at his death. Lord Elgin was dead and Lord Canning; and Lord Dalhousie had been some years dead. The Duke of Newcastle died in 1864. Mr. Gladstone, speaking at Glasgow, said of these, that 'they had been swept away in the full maturity of their faculties and in the early stages of middle life—a body of men strong enough of themselves in all the gifts of wisdom and of knowledge, of experience and of eloquence, to have equipped a Cabinet for the service of the country.' Nor must we omit to mention the death of Cardinal Wiseman on February 15, 1865. Cardinal Wiseman had outlived the popular clamour once raised against him in England. There was a time when his name would have set all the pulpit-drums of no-Popery rattling; he came at length to be respected and admired everywhere in England as a scholar and a man of ability. He was a devoted ecclesiastic, whose zeal for his Church was his honour, and whose earnest labour in the work he was set to do had shortened his busy life.

During the time from the first outbreak of the Civil War in the United States to its close all these men were removed from the scene, and the Civil War was hardly over when Richard Cobden was quietly laid in an English country churchyard. Mr. Cobden paid a visit to his constituents of Rochdale in November 1864, to address them on public affairs. He was at the time struggling against a bronchial attack which made it imprudent for him to attend a public meeting—especially imprudent to try to speak in public. He had to travel a long way in bad weather. His friends endeavoured to dissuade him from going to Rochdale; but he was convinced that the condition of political affairs was so full of seriousness that he could not consistently with his strong sense of duty put off addressing his constituents. He had had probably some presentiment of his death; for not long before he had passed, in company with his friend Mr. Bright, the place where his only son lay buried, and he told Mr. Bright that he should soon be laid beside him. He went to Rochdale and spoke to a great public meeting, and he did not appear to have lacked any of his usual ease and energy. This speech, the last he ever made, contained the famous passage so often quoted and criticised, which compared the undergraduate's knowledge of Chicago with his knowledge of the Ilyssus. 'I will take any undergraduate,' said Cobden, 'now at Oxford or Cambridge, and I will ask this young gentleman to walk up to a map of the United States and put his finger upon the city of Chicago, and I will undertake to say that he will not go within a thousand miles of it. When I was at Athens I sallied forth one summer morning to see the far-famed river the Ilyssus, and after walking some hundred yards up what appeared to be the bed of a winter torrent, I came up to a number of Athenian laundresses, and I found that

they had dammed up this far-famed classic river, and that they were using every drop of the water for their linen and such sanitary purposes. I say why should not the young gentlemen who are taught all about the geography of the Ilyssus know something about the geography of the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Missouri?' Mr. Cobden has always been charged on the faith of this contrast with a desire to throw contempt on the study of the classics, and with an intention to measure the comparative value of ancient and modern literature by the relative commercial importance of Chicago and the Ilyssus. He had no such purpose. He merely meant to show that the men who dogmatised about modern countries and politics ought to know something of the subject before they spoke and wrote. He contended that it is ridiculous to call a modern political writer educated because he knows something about classic Greece and nothing about the United States. The humorous illustration about the Ilyssus Mr. Cobden had used in a former speech; and curiously enough something to much the same purpose had been said by Byron about the Ilyssus before, without anyone falling foul of the author of 'Childe Harold,' and accusing him of disparaging the culture of Greece. Byron wrote that 'places without a name and rivers not laid down on maps may one day, when more known, be justly esteemed superior subjects for the pencil and the pen to the dry ditch of the Ilyssus and the bogs of Bœotia.' Cobden had been a good deal provoked, as most sensible persons were, by the flood of writing poured out on the country during the American Civil War, in which citations from Thucydides were habitually introduced to settle questions of military and political controversy in the United States. That was the day for public instructors, of the inspired schoolboy type, who sometimes, to say the truth, knew little of the Greek literature from which they paraded their quotations, but who knew still less about the geography or the political conditions of America; who were under the impression that the Mississippi flowed east and west, and talked complacently of English war steamers getting into Lake Erie, apparently making no account of so considerable an obstacle as the Falls of Niagara.

This was Cobden's last speech. He did not come up to London until the March of 1865, and the day on which he travelled was so bitterly cold that the bronchial affection from which he was suffering became cruelly aggravated. One of the last private letters he ever wrote enclosed to a friend an unsolicited contribution for the relief of a poor young Englishwoman, whose husband, an American seaman, had just died in London, leaving her with a newly-born infant. He sank rapidly, and on April 2 he died. The scene in the House of Commons next evening was very touching. Lord Palmerston and Mr. Disraeli both spoke of Cobden with

genuine feeling and sympathy; but Mr. Bright's few and broken words were as noble an epitaph as friendship could wish for the grave of a great and a good man. Some critics found fault with Lord Palmerston for having spoken of Cobden's as 'Demosthenic eloquence.' That simple conversational style, it was asked—does Lord Palmerston call that Demosthenic? Did he not use the word as a piece of unmeaning praise, merely because it came first to his lips? On the contrary, it is probable that Palmerston thought the word expressed exactly what he wished to say. We are apt to think of the eloquence of Demosthenes as above all things energetic, commanding, overbearing by its strength and its action. But this is a superficial way of regarding the great orator. What is the essential characteristic of the oratory of Demosthenes, in which it differs from that of almost every other orator, ancient and modern? Surely its intensely practical nature; the fact that nothing is spoken without a present and determinate purpose; that no word is used which does not bear upon the argument the speaker would enforce. Cobden had not the power or the polish of Demosthenes, nor can his manner have been at all like that of the Athenian; but his eloquence was always moulded naturally and unconsciously in the true spirit of Demosthenes. It was the eloquence of one who claimed only to be heard for his cause, and for the arguments with which he should commend it to the intelligence of his audience. Those who found fault with Lord Palmerston's epithet only failed to understand its application.

The Liberal party then found themselves approaching a general election, with their ranks thinned by many severe losses. The Government had lost one powerful member by an event other than death. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Westbury, had resigned his office in consequence of a vote of the House of Commons. Lord Westbury had made many enemies. He was a man of great capacity and energy, into whose nature the scorn of fools and of lesser intellects entered far too freely. His character was somewhat wanting in the dignity of moral elevation. He had a tongue of marvellous bitterness. His sarcastic power was probably unequalled in the House of Commons while he sat there; and when he came into the House of Lords he fairly took away the breath of stately and formal peers by the unsparing manner in which he employed his most dangerous gift. His style of cruel irony was made all the more effective by the peculiar suavity of the tone in which he gave out his sarcasms and his epithets. With a face that only suggested soft bland benevolence, with eyes half closed as those of a mediæval saint, and in accents of subdued mellifluous benignity, the Lord Chancellor was wont to pour out a stream of irony that corroded like some deadly acid. Such

a man was sure to make enemies; and the time came when, in the Scriptural sense, they found him out. He had been lax in his manner of using his patronage. In one case he had allowed an official of the House of Lords to retire, and to receive a retiring pension, while a grave charge connected with his conduct in another public office was to Lord Westbury's knowledge impending over him; and Lord Westbury had appointed his own son to the place thus vacated. Thus at first sight it naturally appeared that Lord Westbury had sanctioned the pensioning off of a public servant against whom a serious charge was still awaiting decision, in order that a place might be found for the Lord Chancellor's own son. In the other case, that of an appointment to the Leeds Bankruptcy Court, the authority of Lord Westbury had been made use of by a member of his family to sanction a very improper arrangement. In this case, however, it was shown that Lord Westbury knew nothing of the proposal, and had never had any idea of assisting any member of his family by his influence in the matter. No one believed that even in the former case he had been influenced by any corrupt motive. He had been led into error by a too easy good-nature towards certain members of his family, and by a carelessness which the engrossing character of his other duties might at least have excused, if it could not have justified. Still there could be no doubt that the manner in which he had exercised his patronage, or allowed it to be exercised, was deserving of reprehension.

The question was taken up by the House of Commons; and somewhat unfortunately taken up in the first instance by a strong political opponent of the Government. On July 3, 1865, Mr. Ward Hunt moved a distinct vote of censure on the Lord Chancellor. The House did not agree to the resolution, which would have branded the Lord Chancellor's conduct as 'highly reprehensible, and calculated to throw discredit on the administration of the high offices of the State.' It, however, accepted an amendment which, while acquitting Lord Westbury of any corrupt motive, declared that the granting of the pension showed a laxity of practice and a want of caution with regard to the public interests on the part of the Lord Chancellor. The Government were not able to resist this resolution. Lord Palmerston made the best effort he could to save the Lord Chancellor; but the common feeling of the House held that the words of the resolution were not too strong; and the Government had to bow to it. The Lord Chancellor immediately resigned his office. No other course was fairly open to him. The Government lost a man of singular ability and energy. Lord Westbury's fall was not perhaps so much the result of the one or two transactions for which the censure was passed, as of the growing dislike which both Houses had come to feel for

an intellect too keen to be scrupulous, and a nature which brought even to the uninspiring business of law reforms some of the fierce animosities to which the tongue of a Swift would hardly have given a more bitter expression. Many thought, when all was done, that he had been somewhat harshly used. He would, perhaps, have been greatly surprised himself to know how many kindly things were said of him.

The hour of political reaction was evidently near at hand. Five years had passed away since the withdrawal of Lord John Russell's Reform Bill; and five years may represent in ordinary calculation the ebb or flow of the political tide. The dissolution of Parliament was near. Lord Derby described the Speech from the Throne, at the opening of the session of 1865, as a sort of address very proper to be delivered by an aged minister to a moribund Parliament. The Parliament had run its course. It had accomplished the rare feat of living out its days, and having to die by simple efflux of time. On July 6, 1865, Parliament was dissolved. Mr. Disraeli's address to the electors of Buckinghamshire, sent out before the dissolution, distinctly declared that the issue which the country would have to decide concerned the National Church and the franchise. 'The maintenance of a National Church,' he said, 'involves the question whether the principle of religion shall be an element of our political constitution; whether the State shall be consecrated; or whether, dismissing the sanctions that appeal to the higher feelings of man, our scheme of government should degenerate into a mere system of police.' 'I see nothing,' he proclaimed, 'in such a result but the corruption of nations and the fall of empires.' As regards the franchise he was vaguely grandiloquent; and both the vagueness and grandiloquence were doubtless deliberate and to serve a purpose. 'On the extension of the Electoral Franchise,' he observed, 'depends the distribution of power.' He was of opinion that 'the primary plan of our ancient constitution, so rich in various wisdom, indicates the course we ought to pursue.' What that course was Mr. Disraeli took good care not to explain too clearly. The ancient constitution, he showed, had 'secured our popular rights by entrusting power not to an indiscriminate multitude, but to the Estate or Order of the Commons; and a wise Government should be careful that the elements of that Estate should bear a due relation to the moral and material development of the country.' Public opinion, he suggested, might not be yet ripe enough to legislate on the subject; but the country 'might ponder over it with advantage, so that when the time comes for action we may legislate in the spirit of the English Constitution, which would absorb the best of every class, and not fall into a democracy, which is the tyranny of one class, and that one the least enlightened.' Translated into plain

English, these pompous generalities meant clearly enough, although perhaps men did not all see it just then, that Mr. Disraeli would be prepared, if his turn should arrive, to bring in a Reform Bill, and that he still had hopes of being able to satisfy the country without going too far in the direction of popular suffrage. But it seems evident now that he had left it open to him to take even that course should it come in his way. No matter how wide the extension of the franchise which he found himself driven to make, he could always say that in his opinion it only absorbed the best of a class, and did not allow us to fall into a democracy.

'Which spills the foremost foeman's life, that party conquers in the strife.' The first blow was struck in the city of London, and the Liberals carried all the seats. Four Liberals were elected. In Westminster the contest was somewhat remarkable. The constituency of Westminster always had the generous ambition to wish to be represented by at least one man of distinction. Westminster had been represented by Fox. It had more lately had Sir Francis Burdett for one of its representatives and Cochrane for another. Byron's friend Hobhouse long represented Westminster. More lately still it had had Sir de Lacy Evans, not much of a politician to be sure, but a very gallant soldier, a man whose name was, at all events, to adopt the French phrase, 'in the play bill.' This time Mr. Mill was induced to come out of his calm retirement in Avignon and accept the candidature for Westminster. He issued an address embodying his well-known political opinions. He declined to look after local business, and on principle he objected to pay any part of the expenses of election. It was felt to be a somewhat bold experiment to put forward such a man as Mill among the candidates for the representation of a popular constituency. His opinions were extreme. He was not known to belong to any church or religious denomination. He was a philosopher, and English political organisations do not love philosophers. He was almost absolutely unknown to his countrymen in general. Until he came forward as a leader of the agitation in favour of the Northern cause during the Civil War, he had never, so far as we know, been seen on an English political platform. Even of the electors of Westminster very few had ever seen him before his candidature. Many were under the vague impression that he was a clever man who wrote wise books, and died long ago. He was not supposed to have any liking or capacity for Parliamentary life. More than ten years before it was known to a few that he had been invited to stand for an Irish county and had declined. That was at the time when his observations on the Irish land tenure system and the condition of Ireland generally had filled the hearts of many Irishmen with delight and wonder—delight and wonder to find that a cold English philosopher and economist should form

such just and generous opinions about Irish questions, and should express them with such a noble courage. Since that time he had not been supposed to have any inclination for public life; nor we believe had any serious effort been made to tempt him out of his retirement. The idea now occurred to Mr. James Beal, a popular Westminster politician, and he pressed it so earnestly on Mill as a public duty that Mill did not feel at liberty to refuse. Mill was one of the few men who have only to be convinced that a thing was incumbent on them as a public duty to set about doing it forthwith, no matter how distasteful it might be to them personally, or what excellent excuses they might offer for leaving the duty to others. He had written things which might well make him doubtful about the prudence of courting the suffrages of an English popular constituency. He was understood to be a rationalist; he was a supporter of many political opinions that seemed to ordinary persons much like 'fads,' or crotchets, or even crazes. He had once said in his writings, that the working-classes in England were given to lying. He had now to stand up on platforms before crowded and noisy assemblies where everything he had ever written or said could be made the subject of question and of accusation; and with enemies outside capable of torturing every explanation to his disadvantage. A man of independent opinions and who has not been ashamed to change his opinions when he thought them wrong, or afraid to put on record each opinion in the time when he held to it, is at much disadvantage on the hustings. He will find out there what it is to have written books and to have enemies. Mill triumphed over all the difficulties by downright courage and honesty. When asked at a public meeting chiefly composed of working men, whether he had ever said the working classes were given to lying, he answered straight out, 'I did;' a bold, blunt admission without any qualification. The boldness and frankness of the reply struck home to the manhood of the working men who listened to him. Here they saw a leader who would never shrink from telling them the truth. Mr. Mill has himself described what followed his answer. 'Scarcely were these two words out of my mouth, when vehement applause resounded through the whole meeting. It was evident that the working people were so accustomed to expect equivocation and evasion from those who sought their suffrages, that when they found, instead of that, a direct avowal of what was likely to be disagreeable to them, instead of being affronted they concluded at once that this was a person they could trust. . . . The first working man who spoke after the incident I have mentioned (it was Mr. Odger) said that the working classes had no desire not to be told of their faults; they wanted friends, not flatterers; and felt under obligation to anyone who told them anything in themselves which he sincerely believed to require amend-

ment. And to this the meeting heartily responded.' One is in doubt whether to admire more the frankness of the speaker or the manly good sense of those to whom he spoke. 'As much to my surprise,' says Mr. Mill, 'as to that of anyone, I was returned to Parliament by a majority of some hundreds over my Conservative competitor.'

In many other instances there was a marked indication that the political tide had turned in favour of Liberal opinions. Mr. Thomas Hughes, author of 'Tom Brown's Schooldays,' a Radical of the 'muscular Christianity' order, as it was called, was returned for Lambeth. Mr. Duncan M'Laren, brother-in-law of Mr. Bright, and an advanced Radical, was elected for Edinburgh, unseating a mild Whig. Mr. G. O. Trevelyan, a brilliant young Radical, nephew of Macaulay, came into Parliament. In Ireland some men of strong opinions, of ability, and of high character found seats in the House of Commons for the first time. One of these was Mr. J. B. Dillon, a man who had been concerned in the Irish Rebellion of 1848. He had long opposed the idea of an armed rising, believing it inopportune and hopeless, but nevertheless when the movement was precipitated by events he went and took his place in front of it with his leader. Mr. Dillon had lived for some years in the United States, and had lately returned to Ireland under an amnesty. He at once reassumed a leading part in Irish politics, and won a high reputation for his capacity and his integrity. He promised to have an influential part in bringing together the Irish members and the English Liberals, but his untimely death cut short what would unquestionably have been a very useful career. Wherever there was a change in the character of the new Parliament it seemed to be in favour of advanced Reform. It was not merely that the Tories were left in a minority, but that so many mild Whigs had been removed to give place to genuine Liberals. There seemed to be little doubt that this new Parliament would do something to make its existence memorable. No one surely could have expected that it would vindicate its claim to celebrity in the peculiar manner that its short history illustrates. Mr. Disraeli himself expressed his opinion of the new Parliament after it had been but a short time sitting. He spoke of it as one which had distinctly increased the strength and the following of Mr. Bright. No one could fail to see, he pointed out, that Mr. Bright occupied a very different position now from that which he had held in the late Parliament. New men had come into the House of Commons, men of integrity and ability, who were above all things advanced Reformers. The position of Mr. Gladstone was markedly changed. He had been defeated at the University of Oxford by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, but was at once put in nomination for South Lancashire, which was still open, and he was elected there. His severance

from the University was regarded by Liberals as his political emancipation. The Reformers then would have at their head the two great Parliamentary orators (one of them undoubtedly the future Prime Minister), and the greatest philosophical writer and thinker of the day. This Liberal triumvirate, as they were called, would have behind them many new and earnest men, to whom their words would be a law. The alarmed Tories said to themselves that between England and the democratic flood there was left but one barrier, and that was in the person of the old statesman, now in his eighty-first year, of whom more and more doubtful rumours began to arrive in London every day.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE DEATH OF LORD PALMERSTON.

'UNARM, EROS; the long day's task is done, and we must sleep!' A long, very long, day's task was nearly done. A marvellous career was fast drawing to its close. Down in Hertfordshire Lord Palmerston was dying. As Mirabeau said of himself, so Palmerston might have said, he could already hear the preparations for the funeral of Achilles. He had enjoyed life to the last as fully as ever Churchill did, although in a different sense. Long as his life was, if counted by mere years, it seems much longer still when we consider what it had compassed, and how active it had been from the earliest to the very end. Many men were older than Lord Palmerston; he left more than one senior behind him. But they were for the most part men whose work had long been done; men who had been consigned to the arm-chair of complete inactivity. Palmerston was a hardworking statesman until within a very few days of his death. He had been a member of Parliament for nearly sixty years. He entered Parliament for the first time in the year when Byron, like himself a Harrow boy, published his first poems. He had been in the House of Commons for thirty years when the Queen came to the throne. He used to play chess with the unfortunate Caroline of Brunswick, wife of the Prince Regent, when she lived at Kensington as Princess of Wales. In 1808, being then one of the Lords of the Admiralty, he had defended the Copenhagen expedition of the year before, and insisted that it was a stroke indispensable to the defeat of the designs of Napoleon. During all his political career he was only out of office for rare and brief seasons. To be a private member of Parliament was a short occasional episode in his suc-

cessful life. In the words of Sadi, the Persian poet, he had obtained an ear of corn from every harvest.

It was only during the session of 1865 that Lord Palmerston began to give evidence that he was suffering severely at last from that affliction which has been called the most terrible of all diseases—old age. Up to the beginning of that year he had scarcely shown any signs of actual decay. He had, indeed, been for a long time a sufferer from occasional fits of gout, lately in hands as well as feet. During the winter of the *Trent* seizure he had been much disabled and tortured by a visitation of this kind, which almost entirely crippled him. But in this country the gout has long ceased to be an evidence of old age. It only too commonly accompanies middle life; and, indeed, like black Care in the poet's verse, seems able to cling on to any horseman. But during the session of 1865 Lord Palmerston began to show that he was receiving the warnings which Death, in Mrs. Thrale's pretty poem, is made to give of his coming. He suffered much for some of the later months. His eyesight had become very weak, and even with the help of strong glasses he found it difficult to read. He was getting feeble in every way. He ceased to have that joy of the strife which inspired him during Parliamentary debate even up to the attainment of his eightieth year. He had kept up his bodily vigour and the youthful elasticity of his spirits so long, that it must have come on him with the shock of a painful surprise when he first found that his frame and his nerves were beyond doubt giving way, and that he too must succumb to the cruel influence of years. The collapse of his vigour came on almost at a stroke. On his eightieth birthday, in October, 1864, he started, Mr. Ashley tells us, 'at half-past eight from Broadlands, taking his horses by train to Fareham, was met by engineer officers, and rode along the Portsdown and Hilsea lines of forts, getting off his horse and inspecting some of them, crossing over to Anglesey forts and Gosport, and not reaching home till six in the evening.' Earlier in the same year he rode one day from his house in Piccadilly to Harrow, trotting the distance of nearly twelve miles within one hour. Such performances testify to an energy of what one would almost call youthful vitality, rare indeed even in the history of our long-living time. But in 1865 the change set in all at once. Lord Palmerston began to discontinue his attendances at the House; when he did attend, it was evident that he went through his Parliamentary duties with difficulty, and even with pain. The Tiverton election on the dissolution of Parliament was his last public appearance. He went from Tiverton to Brocket, in Hertfordshire, a place which Lady Palmerston had inherited from Lord Melbourne, her brother; and there he remained. The gout had become very serious now. It had flown to

a dangerous place; and Lord Palmerston had made the danger greater by venturing with his too youthful energy to ride out before he had nearly recovered from one severe attack. On October 17 a bulletin was issued, announcing that Lord Palmerston had been seriously ill, in consequence of having taken cold, but that he had been steadily improving for three days, and was then much better. Somehow this announcement failed to reassure people in London. Many had only then for the first time heard that Palmerston was ill, and the bare mention of the fact fell ominously on the ear of the public. The very next morning these suspicions were confirmed. It was announced that Lord Palmerston's condition had suddenly altered for the worse, and that he was gradually sinking. Then everyone knew that the end was near. There was no surprise when the news came next day that Palmerston was dead. He died on October 18. Had he lived only two days longer he would have completed his eighty-first year. He was buried in Westminster Abbey with public honours on October 27. No man since the death of the Duke of Wellington had filled so conspicuous a place in the public mind. No man had enjoyed anything like the same amount of popularity. He died at the moment when that popularity had reached its very zenith. It had become the fashion of the day to praise all he said and all he did. It was the settled canon of the ordinary Englishman's faith that what Palmerston said England must feel. To stand forward as the opponent, or even the critic, of anything done or favoured by him was to be unpopular and unpatriotic. Lord Palmerston had certainly lived long enough in years, in enjoyment, in fame. It seems idle to ask what might have happened if a man of more than eighty could have lived and held his place in active public life for a few years more. But if one were to indulge in such speculation, the assumption would be that in such an event there must have been some turn in the tide of that almost unparalleled popularity and success. Fortunate in everything during his later years, Lord Palmerston was withdrawn from chance and change just when his fortune had reached its flood.

It is hardly necessary to say that the regret for Palmerston was very general and very genuine. Privately, he can hardly have had any enemies. He had a kindly heart, which won on all people who came near him. He had no enduring enmities or capricious dislikes; and it was therefore very hard for ill-feeling to live in his beaming, friendly presence. He never disliked men merely because he had often to encounter them in political war. He tried his best to give them as good as they brought, and he bore no malice. There were some men whom he disliked, as we have already mentioned in these volumes, but they were men who for one reason or

another stood persistently in his way, and who he fancied he had reason to believe had acted treacherously towards him. He liked a man to be 'English,' and he liked him to be what he considered a gentleman; but he did not restrict his definition of the word 'gentleman' to the mere qualifications of birth or social rank. His manners were frank and genial rather than polished; and his is one of the rare instances in which a man contrived always to keep up his personal dignity without any stateliness of bearing and tone. He was a model combatant; when the combat was over, he was ready to sit down by his antagonist's side and be his friend, and talk over their experiences and exploits. He was absolutely free from affectation. This very fact gave sometimes an air almost of roughness to his manners, he could be so plain-spoken and downright when suddenly called on to express his mind. He was not in the highest sense of the word a truthful man; that is to say, there were episodes of his career in which for purposes of statecraft he allowed the House of Commons and the country to become the dupes of an erroneous impression. Personally truthful and honourable of course it would be superfluous to pronounce him. A man of Palmerston's bringing up is as certain to be personally truthful as he is to be brave, and to be fond of open-air exercise and the cold bath. But Palmerston was too often willing to distinguish between the personal and the political integrity of a statesman. The distinction is common to the majority of statesmen; so much the worse for statesmanship. But the gravest errors of this kind which Palmerston had committed were committed for an earlier generation. The general public of 1865 took small account of them. Not many would have cared much then about the grim story of Sir Alexander Burnes's despatches, or the manner in which Palmerston had played with the hopes of foreign Liberalism, conducting it more than once rather to its grave than to its triumph. These things lived only in the minds of a few at the time when the news of his death came, and even of that few not many were anxious to dwell upon them. It was noticed at the time that the London newspaper which had persistently attacked his policy and himself since the hour when it came into existence, appeared in deep mourning the day after his death. Some thought this show of regret inconsistent; some declared it hypocritical. There is no reason to think it either the one or the other. Without retracting one word of condemnation uttered concerning Palmerston's policy, it was surely natural to feel sincere regret for the death of one who had filled so large a space in the public eye; a man of extraordinary powers, and whose love for his country had never been denied. 'Dead! that quits all scores!' is the exclamation of the gipsy in 'Guy Mannering'—only a simple untaught version of the 'sunt lachrymæ rerum' of Virgil,

which Fox quoted to explain his feelings when he grieved for the death of the rival whose public actions he could not even at such a moment pretend to approve.

Whether Lord Palmerston belonged to the first order of statesmen can be only matter of speculation and discussion. He was not afforded any opportunity of deciding the question. It was the happy fortune of his country during all his long career to have never been placed in any position of organic danger. Not for one moment was there any crisis of the order which enables a man to prove that he is a statesman of the foremost class. It would be almost as profitable to ask ourselves whether the successful captain of one of the Cunard steamers might have been a Nelson or a Columbus, as to ask whether under the pressure of great emergency Palmerston might have been a really great statesman. If we were to test him by his judgment in matters of domestic policy, we should have to rate him somewhat low. The description which Grattan gave of Burke would have to be reversed in Lord Palmerston's case. Instead of saying that 'he saw everything; he foresaw everything,' we should have to say, he saw nothing; he foresaw nothing. He was hardly dead when the great changes which he had always scoffed at and declared impossible came to pass. Marshal MacMahon once said that in some given contingency the *chassepôts* of the French soldiers would go off of themselves. Such seemed to be the condition of the very reforms which Palmerston had persuaded himself to regard as un-English and impossible. They went off of themselves, one might say, the moment he was gone. Nor was it that his strength had withstood them. If he had been ten years younger they would probably have gone off in spite of him. They waited out of courtesy to him, to his age, and to the certainty that before very long he must be out of the way.

But of course Lord Palmerston is not to be judged by his domestic policy. We might as well judge of Frederick the Great by his poetry, or Richelieu by his play. Palmerston was himself only in the Foreign Office, and in the House of Commons. In both alike the recognition of his true capacity came very late. His Parliamentary training had been perfected before its success was acknowledged. He was therefore able to use his faculties at any given moment to their fullest stretch. He could always count on them. They had been so well drilled by long practice that they would instantly come at call. He understood the moods of the House of Commons to perfection. He could play upon those moods as a performer does upon the keys of an instrument. The doctor in one of Dickens' stories contrives to seem a master of his business by simply observing what those around the patient have been

doing and wish to do, and advising that just those things shall be done. Lord Palmerston often led the House of Commons after the same fashion. He saw what men were in the mood to do, and he did it; and they were clear that that must be a great leader who led them just whither they felt inclined to go. The description which Burke gave of Charles Townshend would very accurately describe what Lord Palmerston came to be in his later days. He became the spoilt child of the House of Commons. Only it has to be added, that as the spoilt child usually spoils the parent, so Palmerston did much to spoil the House that petted him. He would not allow it to remain long in the mood to tolerate high principles, or any talk about them. Much earnestness he knew bored the House, and he took care never to be much in earnest. He left it to others to be eloquent. It was remarked at the time that 'the Prime Minister who is now, and has been for years, far more influential in England than ever Bolingbroke was, wielding a political power as great as any ever owned by Chatham or Pitt; as supreme in his own country as Cavour was in Sardinia; holding a position such as no French statesman has held for generations in France, has scarcely any pretension whatever to be considered an orator, and has not during the whole course of his long career affixed his name to any grand act of successful statesmanship.' Lord Palmerston never cared to go deeper in his speeches than the surface in everything. He had no splendid phraseology; and probably would not have cared to make any display of splendid phraseology even if he had the gift. No speech of his would be read except for the present interest of the subject. No passages from Lord Palmerston are quoted by anybody. He always selected, and doubtless by a kind of instinct, not the arguments which were most logically cogent, but those which were most likely to suit the character and the temper of the audience he happened to be addressing. He spoke for his hearers, not for himself; to affect the votes of those to whom he was appealing, not for the sake of expressing any deep irrepressible convictions of his own. He never talked over the heads of his audience, or compelled them to strain their intellects in order to keep pace with his flights. No other statesman of our time could interpose so dexterously just before the division to break the effect of some telling speech against him, and to bring the House into a frame of mind for regarding all that had been done by the Opposition as a mere piece of political ceremonial, gone through in deference to the traditions or the formal necessities of party, on which it would be a waste of time to bestow serious thought. A writer quoted by Mr. Ashley has remarked upon Lord Palmerston's habit 'of interjecting occasionally a sort of guttural sound between his

words, which must necessarily have been fatal to anything like true oratorical effect, but which somehow seemed to enhance the peculiar effectiveness of his unprepared, easy, colloquial style.' The writer goes on to say that this occasional hesitation 'often did much to increase the humour of some of the jocular hits in which Lord Palmerston so commonly delighted.' 'The joke seemed to be so entirely unpremeditated; the audience were kept for a moment in such amusing suspense, while the speaker was apparently turning over the best way to give the hit, that when at last it came it was enjoyed with the keener relish.'

Nothing is more rash than to attempt to convey in cold words an idea of the effect which a happy phrase from Lord Palmerston could sometimes produce upon a hesitating audience, and how it could throw ridicule upon a very serious case. Let us, however, make one experiment. Mr. Disraeli had once made a long and heavy attack on the Ministry, opened quite a battery of argument and sarcasm against them for something they had done or had left undone. Towards the close of his speech he observed that it was no part of his duty to suggest to the Ministry the exact course they ought to pursue; he would abstain from endeavouring to influence the House by offering any opinion of his own on that subject. Lord Palmerston began his reply by seizing on this harmless bit of formality. 'The right honourable gentleman,' he said, 'has declared that he abstained from endeavouring to influence the House by any advice of his own. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that is indeed patriotic.' The manner in which Palmerston spoke the words; the peculiar pause before he found the exact epithet with which to commend Mr. Disraeli's conduct; the twinkle of the eye; the tone of the voice—all made this ironical commendation more effective than the finest piece of satire would have been just then. Lord Palmerston managed to put it as if Mr. Disraeli, conscious of the impossibility of his having any really sound advice to offer, had out of combined modesty and love of country deliberately abstained from offering an opinion that might perhaps have misled the ignorant. The effect of Mr. Disraeli's elaborate attack was completely spoilt. The House was no longer in a mood to consider it seriously. This, it may be said, was almost in the nature of a practical joke. Not a few of Palmerston's clever instantaneous effects partook to a certain extent of the nature of a good-humoured practical joke; but Palmerston only had recourse to these oratorical artifices when he was sure that the temper of the House and the condition of the debate would make them serve his momentary purpose. It was hardly better than a mere joke when Palmerston, charged with having acted unfairly in China by first favouring the great rebellion, and then indirectly helping the Chinese Government to put it down, blandly

asked what could be more impartial conduct than to help the rebels first and the Government after. It was a mere joke to declare that a member who had argued against Palmerston's scheme of fortifications, had himself admitted the necessity of such a plan by saying that he had taken care to 'fortify himself' with facts in order to debate the question. These were not, however, the purely frivolous jests that when thus told they may seem to be. They had all of them the distinct purpose of convincing the House that Lord Palmerston thought nothing of the arguments urged against him; that they did not call for any serious consideration; that a careless jest was the only way in which it would be worth his while to answer them. It is certain that not only was the opponent, not only were other possible opponents, disconcerted by this way of dealing with the question, but that many listeners became convinced by it that there could be nothing in the case which Lord Palmerston treated with such easy levity. They had all, and more than all, the effect of Pitt's throwing down his pen and ceasing to take notes during Erskine's speech, or O'Connell's smile and amused shake of the head at the earnestness of an ambitious young speaker, who thought he was making a damaging case against him, and compelling a formidable and elaborate reply. The jests of Lord Palmerston always had a purpose in them, and were better adapted to the occasion and the moment than the repartees of the best debater in the House. At one time, indeed, he flung his jests and personalities about in somewhat too reckless a fashion, and he made many enemies. But of late years, whether from growing discretion or kindly feeling, he seldom indulged in any pleasantries that could wound or offend. During his last Parliament he represented to the full the average head and heart of a House of Commons singularly devoid of high ambition or steady purpose; a House peculiarly intolerant of eccentricity, especially if it were that of genius; impatient of having its feelings long strained in any one direction, delighting only in ephemeral interests and excitements; hostile to anything which drew heavily on the energy or the intelligence. Such a House naturally acknowledged a heavy debt of gratitude to the statesman who never either puzzled or bored them. Men who distrusted Mr. Disraeli's antitheses, and were frightened by Mr. Gladstone's earnestness, found as much relief in the easy, pleasant, straightforward talk of Lord Palmerston, as a schoolboy finds in a game of marbles after a problem or a sermon.

We have not now to pronounce upon Lord Palmerston's long career. Much of this 'History of our own Times' is necessarily the history of the life and administration of a statesman who entered Parliament shortly after Austerlitz. We have commented so far as comment seemed necessary on each passage of his policy as it came under our notice. His greatest praise

with Englishmen must be that he loved England with a sincere love that never abated. He had no predilection, no prejudice, that did not give way where the welfare of England was concerned. He ought to have gone one step higher in the path of public duty; he ought to have loved justice and right even more than he loved England. He ought to have felt more tranquilly convinced that the cause of justice and of right must be the best thing which an English minister could advance even for England's sake in the end. Lord Palmerston was not a statesman who took any lofty view of a minister's duties. His statesmanship never stood on any high moral elevation. He sometimes did things in the cause of England which we may well believe he would not have done for any consideration in any cause of his own. His policy was necessarily shifting, uncertain, and inconsistent; for he moulded it always on the supposed interests of England as they showed themselves to his eyes at the time. His sympathies with liberty were capricious guides. Sympathies with liberty must be so always where there is no clear principle defining objects and guiding conduct. Lord Palmerston was not prevented by his liberal sympathies from sustaining the policy of the *coup d'état*; nor did his hatred of slavery, one of his few strong and genuine emotions apart from English interests, inspire him with any repugnance to the cause of the Southern slaveholders. But it cannot be doubted that his very defects were a main cause of his popularity and his success. He was able always with a good conscience to assure the English people that they were the greatest and the best, the only good and great, people in the world, because he had long taught himself to believe this, and had come to believe it. He was always popular, because his speeches invariably conveyed this impression to the English crowd whom he addressed in or out of Parliament. Other public men spoke for the most part to tell English people of something they ought to do which they were not doing, something which they had done and ought not to have done. It is not in the nature of things that such men should be as popular as those who told England that whatever she did must be right. Nor did Palmerston lay on his praise with coarse and palpable artifice. He had no artifice in the matter. He believed what he said, and his very sincerity made it the more captivating and the more dangerous. A phrase sprang up in Palmerston's days which was employed to stigmatise certain political conduct beyond all ordinary reproach. It was meant to stamp such conduct as outside the pale of reasonable argument or patriotic consideration. That was the word 'un-English.' It was enough with certain classes to say that anything was 'un-English' in order to put it utterly out of court. No matter to what principles, higher, more universal, and more abiding than those that are merely English, it might happen to

appeal, the one word of condemnation was held to be enough for it. Some of the noblest and the wisest men of our day were denounced as un-English. A stranger might have asked in wonder at one time whether it was un-English to be just, to be merciful, to have consideration for the claims and the rights of others, to admit that there was any higher object in a nation's life than a diplomatic success. All that would have made a man odious and insufferable in private life was apparently held up as belonging to the virtues of the English nation. Rude self-assertion, blunt disregard for the feelings and the claims of others, a self-sufficiency which would regard all earth's interests as made for England's special use alone—the yet more outrageous form of egotism which would fancy that the moral code as it applies to others does not apply to us—all this seemed to be considered the becoming national characteristic of the English people. It would be almost superfluous to say that this did not show its worst in Lord Palmerston himself. As in art, so in politics, we never see how bad some peculiar defect is until we see it in the imitators of a great man's style. A school of Palmerston's, had it been powerful and lasting, would have made England a nuisance to other nations.

Certainly a statesman's first business is to take care of the interests of his own country. His duty is to prefer her interests to those of any other country. In our rough and ready human system he is often compelled to support her in a policy, the principle of which he did not cordially approve in the first instance. He must do his best to bring her with honour out of a war, even though he would not himself have made or sanctioned the war if the decision had been in his power. He cannot break sharply away from the traditions of his country. Mr. Disraeli often succeeded in throwing a certain amount of disrepute on some of his opponents by calling them the advocates of 'cosmopolitanism.' If the word had any meaning, it meant, we presume, that the advocates of 'cosmopolitanism' were men who had no particular prejudices in favour of their country's interests, and were as ready to take an enemy's side of a question as that of their own people. If there were such politicians—and we have never heard of any such since the execution of Anacharsis Clootz—we could not wonder that their countrymen should dislike them, and draw back from putting any trust in them at a critical moment. They might be held to resemble some of the pragmatical sentimentalists who at one time used to argue that the ties of family are of no account to the truly wise and just, and that a good man should love all his neighbours as well as he loved his wife and children. Such people are hopeless in practical affairs. Taking no account of the very springs of human motive, they are sure to go wrong in everything they try to do or to estimate. An English minister must be an English minister

first of all; but he will never be a great minister if he does not in all his policy recognise the truth that there are considerations of higher account for him, and for England too, than England's immediate interests. If he deliberately or heedlessly allows England to do wrong, he will prove an evil counsellor for her; he will do her harm that may be estimated some day even by the most practical and arithmetical calculation. There is a great truth in the fine lines of the cavalier-poet, which remind his mistress that he could not love her so much, loved he not honour more. It is a truth that applies to the statesman as well as to the lover. No man can truly serve his country to the best of his power who has not in his mind all the time a service still higher than that of his country. In many instances Lord Palmerston allowed England to do things which, if a nation had an individual conscience, he and everyone else would say were wrong. It has to be remembered, too, that what is called England's interest comes to be defined according to the minister's personal interpretation of its meaning. The minister who sets the interest of his country above the moral law is necessarily obliged to decide according to his own judgment at the moment what the interests of his country are, and so it is not even the State which is above the moral law, but only the statesman. We have no hesitation in saying that Lord Palmerston's statesmanship on the whole lowered the moral tone of English politics for a time. This consideration alone, if there were nothing else, forbids us to regard him as a statesman whose deeds were equal to his opportunities and to his genius. To serve the purpose of the hour was his policy. To succeed in serving it was his triumph. It is not thus that a great fame is built up, unless, indeed, where the genius of the man is like that of some Cæsar or Napoleon, which can convert its very ruins into monumental records. Lord Palmerston is hardly to be called a great man. Perhaps he may be called a great 'man of the time.'

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

Lord Russell was invited by the Queen to form a Government after the death of Lord Palmerston. For a few days a certain amount of doubt and speculation prevailed in London and the country generally. It was thought not impossible that, owing to his advanced years, Lord Russell might prove unwilling to take on him the burthen of such an office as that of Prime Minister. The name of Lord Clarendon was suggested by many

as that of a probable head of the new administration. Some talked of Lord Granville. Others had a strong conviction that Mr. Gladstone would himself be invited to take that commanding position in name which he must have in fact. Even when it became certain that Lord Russell was to be the Prime Minister, speculation busied itself as to possible changes in the administration. Many persuaded themselves that the opportunity would be taken to make some bold and sweeping changes, and to admit the Radical element to an influence in the actual councils of the nation such as it had never enjoyed before, and such as its undoubted strength in Parliament and the country now entitled it to have. According to some rumours, Mr. Bright was to become Secretary for India in the new Cabinet; according to others, the great free trade orator was to hold the office of President of the Board of Trade, which had once been offered to his friend Mr. Cobden; and Mr. Mill was to be made Secretary for India. It was soon found, however, that no such novelties were to be announced. The only changes in the Cabinet were that Lord Russell became Prime Minister, and that Lord Clarendon, who had been Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, succeeded him as Foreign Secretary. One or two new men were brought into offices which did not give a seat in the Cabinet. Among these were Mr. Forster, who became Under Secretary for the Colonies in the room of Mr. Chichester Fortescue, now Irish Secretary, and Mr. Goschen, who succeeded Mr. Hutt as Vice-President of the Board of Trade. Both Mr. Forster and Mr. Goschen soon afterwards came to hold high official position and to have seats in the Cabinet. In each instance the appointment was a concession to the growing Liberal feeling of the day; but the concession was slight and cautious. The country knew little about either Mr. Forster or Mr. Goschen at the time; and it will easily be imagined that those who thought a seat in the Cabinet for Mr. Bright was due to the people more even than to the man, and who had some hopes of seeing a similar place offered to Mr. Mill, were not satisfied by the arrangement which called two comparatively obscure men to unimportant office. The outer public did not quite appreciate the difficulties which a Liberal Minister had to encounter in compromising between the Whigs and the Radicals. The Whigs included almost all the members of the party who were really influential by virtue of hereditary rank and noble station. It was impossible to overlook their claims. In a country like England one must pay attention to the wishes of 'the Dukes.' There is a superstition about it. The man who attempted to form a Liberal Cabinet without consulting the wishes of 'the Dukes' would be as imprudent as the Greek commander who in the days of Xenophon would venture on a campaign without consulting the auguries. But it was not only

a superstition which required the Liberal Prime Minister to show deference to the claims of the titled and stately Whigs. The great Whig names were a portion of the traditions of the party. More than that, it was certain that whenever the Liberal party got into difficulties, it would look to the great Whig houses to help it out. Many Liberals began to speak with more or less contempt of the Whigs. They talked of these shadows of a mighty name as Thackeray's Barnes Newcome talks of the senior members of his family, his uncle more particularly. But when the Liberal party fell into disorganisation and difficulty some years after, the influence of the great Whig houses was sought for at once in order to bring about an improved condition of things. Liberalism often turns to the Whigs as a young scapegrace to his father or his guardian. The wild youth will have his own way when things are going smooth; when credit is still good, and family affection is not particularly necessary to his comfort. He is even ready enough to smile at old-fashioned ways and antiquated counsels; but when the hour of pressure comes, when obligations have to be met at last, and the gay bachelor lodgings with the fanciful furniture and the other expensive luxuries have to be given up, then he comes without hesitation to the elder, and assumes as a matter of course that his debts are to be paid and his affairs put in order.

Lord Russell had to pay some deference to the authority of the great Whig houses. Some of them probably looked with alarm enough at the one serious change brought about by the death of Lord Palmerston: the change which made Mr. Gladstone leader of the House of Commons. Meanwhile, there were some changes in the actual condition of things which did not depend on the mere alteration of a Cabinet. The political complexion of the day was likely to be affected in its colour by some of these changes. The House of Commons, elected just before Lord Palmerston's death, was in many respects a very different House from that which it had been his last ministerial act to dissolve. We have already mentioned some of the changes that death had made. Palmerston was gone, and Cobden, and Sir George Lewis, and Sidney Herbert, and Sir James Graham. There were changes, too, not brought about by death. The Lord John Russell of the Reform Bill had been made a Peer, and sat as Earl Russell in the House of Lords. Mr. Lowe, one of the ablest and keenest of political critics, who had for a while been shut down under the responsibilities of office, was a free lance once more. Mr. Lowe, who had before that held office two or three times, was Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education from the beginning of Lord Palmerston's administration until April, 1864. At that time a vote of censure was carried against his department, in other words against himself, on the

motion of Lord Robert Cecil, for alleged 'mutilation' of the reports of the Inspectors of Schools, done, as it was urged, in order to bring the reports into seeming harmony with the educational views entertained by the Committee of Council. Lord Robert Cecil introduced the resolution in a speech singularly bitter and offensive. The motion was carried by a majority of 101 to 93. Mr. Lowe instantly resigned his office; but he did not allow the matter to rest there. He obtained the appointment of a committee to enquire into the whole subject: and the result of the enquiry was not only that Mr. Lowe was entirely exonerated from the charge made against him, but that the resolution of the House of Commons was actually rescinded. It is probable, however, that Mr. Lowe felt that the Government of which he was a member had not given him all the support he might have expected. It is certain that if Lord Palmerston and his leading colleagues had thrown any great energy into their support of him, the vote of censure never could have been carried, and would not have had to be rescinded. This fact was brought back to the memory of many not long after, when Mr. Lowe, still an outsider, became the very Coriolanus of a sudden movement against the Reform policy of a Liberal Government. The vigil of him who treasures up a wrong, if we suppose Mr. Lowe to have had any such feeling, had not to be very long or patient in this instance. On the other hand, Mr. Layard, once a daring and somewhat reckless opponent of Government and Governments, a very Drawcansir of political debate, a swashbuckler and soldado of Parliamentary conflict, had been bound over to the peace, quietly enmeshed in the discipline of subordinate office. Not Michael Peres himself, the 'Copper Captain' of Beaumont and Fletcher, underwent a more remarkable and sudden change when the strong-willed Estifania once had him fast in wedlock, than many a bold and dashing free lance submits to when he has consented to put himself into the comfortable bondmanship of subordinate office. Mr. Layard was therefore now to be regarded as one subdued in purpose. He seemed what Byron called an 'extinct volcano:' a happy phrase more lately adopted by Lord Beaconsfield. Yet the volcanic fire was not wholly gone; it flamed up again on opportunity given. Perhaps Mr. Layard proved most formidable to his own colleagues, when he sometimes had to come into the ring to sustain their common cause. The old vigour of the professional gladiator occasionally drove him a little too heedlessly against the Opposition. So combative a temperament found it hard to submit itself always to the prosaic rigour of mere fact and the proprieties of official decorum.

The change in the leadership of the House of Commons was of course the most remarkable, and the most momentous, of the alterations that had

'aken place. From Lord Palmerston, admired almost to hero-worship by Whigs and Conservatives, the foremost position had suddenly passed to Mr. Gladstone, whose admirers were the most extreme of the Liberals, and who was distrusted and dreaded by all of Conservative instincts and sympathies, on the one side of the House as well as on the other. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli were now brought directly face to face. One led the House; the other led the Opposition. With so many points of difference, and even of contrast, there was one slight resemblance in the political situation of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli. Each was looked on with a certain doubt and dread by a considerable number of his own followers. It is evident that in such a state of things the strategical advantage lay with the leader of the Opposition. He had not to take the initiative in anything, and the least loyal of his followers would cordially serve under him in any effort to thwart a movement made by the Ministry. The Conservatives naturally have always proved the more docile and easily disciplined party. Of late years their policy has necessarily been of a negative character: a policy of resistance or of delay. There is less opportunity for difference of opinion in a party acting with such a purpose than in one of which the principle is to keep pace with changing times and conditions. It came to be seen, however, before long that the Conservative leader was able to persuade his party to accept those very changes against which some of the followers of Mr. Gladstone were found ready to revolt. In order that some of the events to follow may not appear very mysterious, it is well to bear in mind that the formation of the new ministry under Lord Russell had by no means given all the satisfaction to certain sections of the Liberal party which they believed themselves entitled to expect. Some were displeased because the new Government was not Radical enough. Some were alarmed because they fancied it was likely to go too far for the purpose of pleasing the Radicals. Some were vexed because men whom they looked up to as their natural leaders had not been invited to office. A few were annoyed because their own personal claims had been overlooked. One thing was certain: the Government must make a distinct move of some kind in the direction of Reform. So many new and energetic Liberals and Radicals had entered the House of Commons now that it would be impossible for any Liberal Government to hold office on the terms which had of late been conceded to Lord Palmerston. Mr. Gladstone had always been credited with a sensitive earnestness of temper which was commonly believed to have given trouble to his more worldly and easy-going colleagues in the Cabinet of Lord Palmerston. He had what Condorcet has happily called an impatient spirit. It was to many people a problem of deep interest to see whether the genius of Mr.

Gladstone would prove equal to the trying task of leadership under circumstances of such peculiar difficulty. Tact, according to many, was the quality needed for the work—not genius.

Some new men were coming up on both sides of the political field. They were needed. Many conspicuous figures during former years of debate would be missed when the new Parliament came to meet. Among the new men we have already mentioned Mr. Forster, who had taken a conspicuous part in the debates on the American Civil War. Mr. Forster was a man of considerable Parliamentary aptitude; a debater, who, though not pretending to eloquence, was argumentative, vigorous, and persuasive. He had practical knowledge of English politics and social affairs, and was thoroughly representative of a very solid body of English public opinion. In the House of Lords the Duke of Argyll was beginning to take a prominent and even a leading place. The Duke of Argyll was still looked upon as a young man in politics. Nothing can be more curious than the manner in which the landmarks of youth and age have of late years been re-arranged in our political life. What would be regarded as approaching to middle-age in ordinary society is now held to be little better than unfledged youth in Parliamentary life. It is doubtful whether any advantages of family influence or personal capacity could in our day enable men to lead a House or a party at the age when Pitt and Fox were accepted political chiefs. Human life should indeed have stretched out almost to what are called patriarchal limits in order to give a political leader now an opportunity of enjoying a fairly proportionate tenure of leadership. The Duke of Argyll would have passed as a middle-aged man in ordinary life, but he was looked on by many as a sort of boy in politics. He had, indeed, begun life very soon. At this time he was some forty-three years of age, and he had been a prominent public man for more than twenty years. Lord Houghton, in proposing his health at a public dinner some years ago, said good-humouredly that 'the Duke was only seventeen years old'—(he was in fact nineteen)—'when he wrote a pamphlet called "Advice to the Peers," and he has gone on advising us ever since.' Pursuing the career of his friend, Lord Houghton went on to say that 'soon after he got mixed up with ecclesiastical affairs, and was excommunicated.' The ecclesiastical controversy in which the Duke of Argyll engaged so early was the famous struggle concerning the freedom of the Church of Scotland which resulted in the great secession headed by Dr. Chalmers, and the foundation of the Free Church. Into this controversy the Duke of Argyll, then Marquis of Lorne, rushed with all the energy of Scottish youth, but in it he maintained himself with a good deal of the proverbial Scottish caution. Dr. Chalmers welcomed the young con-

troversialist as an able and important adherent. But the Marquis of Lorne was not prepared to follow the great divine and orator into actual secession. The heirs to dukedoms in Great Britain seldom go very far in the way of dissent. The Marquis declined to accept the doctrine of Chalmers, that lay patronage and the spiritual independence of the Church were 'like oil and water, immiscible.' The Free Church movement went on, and the young Marquis drew back. He subsequently vindicated his course, and reviewed the whole question in an essay on the ecclesiastical history of Scotland.

Meanwhile the young controversialist had become Duke of Argyll, on the death of his father in 1847. He did battle in the House of Lords as he had done out of it. He distinguished himself by plunging almost instantaneously into the thick of debate. He very much astonished the staid and formal peers, who had been accustomed to discussion conducted in measured tones and with awful show of deference to age and political standing. The Duke of Argyll spoke upon any and every subject with astonishing fluency, and without the slightest reverence for years and authority. The general impression of the House of Lords for a long time was that youthful audacity, and nothing else, was the chief characteristic of the Duke of Argyll; and for a long time the Duke of Argyll did a good deal to support that impression. He had the temerity before he had been very long in the House to make a sharp personal attack upon Lord Derby. The peers were as much astonished as the spectators round the tilt-yard in 'Ivanhoe,' when they saw the strange young knight strike with his lance's point the shield of the formidable Templar. Lord Derby himself was at first almost bewildered by the unexpected vehemence of his inexperienced opponent. But he soon made up his mind, and bore down upon the Duke of Argyll with all the force of scornful invective which he could summon to his aid. For the hour the Duke of Argyll was as completely overthrown as if he had got in the way of a charge of cavalry. He was in a metaphorical sense left dead on the field. Elderly peers smiled gravely, shook their heads, said they knew how it would be, and congratulated themselves that there was an end of the audacious young debater. But they were quite mistaken. The Duke of Argyll knew of course that he had been soundly beaten, but he did not care. He got up again, and went on just as if nothing had happened. His courage was not broken; his self-confidence moulted no feather. After a while he began to show that there was in him more than self-confidence. The House of Lords found that he really knew a great deal and had a wonderfully clear head, and they learned to endure his dogmatic and professorial ways; but he never grew to be popular amongst them. His style was

far too self-assured; his faith in his own superiority to everybody else was too evident to allow of his having many enthusiastic admirers. He soon, however, got into high office. With his rank, his talents, and his energy, such a thing was inevitable. He joined the Government of Lord Aberdeen in 1852 as Lord Privy Seal, holding an office of dignity, but no special duties, the occupant of which has only to give his assistance in council and general debate. He was afterwards Postmaster-General for two or three years. Under Lord Palmerston, in 1859, he became Lord Privy Seal again, and he retained that office in the Cabinet of Lord Russell.

Mr. Stansfeld was believed to be one of the rising men of the day. He was an advanced Radical, especially known for his sympathies with the movements and the cause of the more energetic of the Italian leaders. He had made a speech during one of the Reform debates of 1860 which called forth a high compliment from Mr. Disraeli, who was always ready to welcome new ability and promise on whatever side it displayed itself. He had proposed a resolution in favour of reduction of expenditure when Lord Palmerston was most active in swelling the war costs of the country. The resolution was well supported, and apparently had a fair chance of success, until Lord Palmerston contrived to alarm the House with the idea that if he did not get his way he would resign; and in the eyes of not a few members the resignation of Lord Palmerston appeared to be much the same thing as the coming again of chaos. Mr. Stansfeld, however, became a person of a certain political importance, and in 1863 Lord Palmerston invited him to take office as one of the Lords of the Admiralty. While he held that office an incident occurred which gave rise to a controversy of rather a curious nature. A plot was discovered in Paris for the assassination of the Emperor of the French. The French Government believed, or said they believed, that Mazzini was connected with the plot. Mazzini was a close friend of Mr. Stansfeld, and it appeared was in the habit of having his private letters sent for him under a feigned name to Mr. Stansfeld's house. At the trial of the accused men in Paris, it was stated by the Procureur-Impérial in his speech, that a paper had been found in the possession of one of the prisoners authorising him to write for money to 'Mr. Flowers,' at the address of Mr. Stansfeld, in London. Now it seemed that Mazzini's letters were sometimes addressed to him as Mr. 'Fiori,' or Flowers. After what we have already told in this history concerning the opening of Mazzini's letters in the Post Office here, it is not very surprising that Mazzini should prefer not to have his letters addressed to his own name. On these facts, however, some members of the House of Commons, Liberals as well as Tories, got up a sort of charge against Mr.

Stansfeld. Not that any man in his senses seriously believed that Mr. Stansfeld had anything to do with an assassination plot; nor, indeed, that there was any evidence to show that Mazzini was acquainted with the peculiar designs of the accused persons in this case. Still it seemed a good chance for an attack on the Ministry, through Mr. Stansfeld; and no one could deny that there was a certain amount of indiscretion, not to say impropriety, in Mr. Stansfeld's good-natured arrangement with Mazzini. A man holding ministerial office, however subordinate, is not warranted in allowing his house to be the receptacle of secret letters for one engaged, like Mazzini, in revolutionary plots against established governments. Mr. Stansfeld felt himself called on to resign his office; and Lord Palmerston, though at first he politely pressed him to reconsider the resolve, consented after a while to accept the resignation. Mr. Stansfeld, however, was sure to be invited to take office again, and the whole episode would probably have been soon forgotten if it were not for one odd incident. During the discussions Mr. Disraeli strongly condemned Mr. Stansfeld for his avowed friendship with Mazzini, and reminded the House of a statement made by Mr. Gallenga, an Italian politician and journalist, to the effect that Mazzini once encouraged him, then a young man of wild and extravagant notions, in a design to kill Charles Albert, King of Sardinia. Mr. Bright came to Mr. Stansfeld's defence in a very kindly and generous speech, made the more effective because of his well-known lack of sympathy with the schemes of revolutionists anywhere. He pointed out that the evidence of Mazzini's distinctly sanctioning regicide was by no means clear, and that Mr. Stansfeld might well be excused if he attached little importance to a story told of Mazzini at such a distant time. Mr. Bright went on good-humouredly to show that high-flown talk about tyrannicide was unfortunately almost a commonplace with a certain class of young rhapsodical political writers, and added that he believed there would be found in a poem called 'A Revolutionary Epick,' written by Mr. Disraeli himself some five-and-twenty or thirty years before, certain lines of eloquent apostrophe in praise of the slaying of tyrants. Mr. Disraeli rose at once, and with some warmth denied that any such sentiment, or any words suggesting it, could be found in the poem. Mr. Bright, of course, accepted the assurance. He explained that he had never seen the poem himself, but had been positively informed that it contained such a passage, and he withdrew the statement with a handsome apology. Everyone supposed the matter would have dropped there. The 'Revolutionary Epick' was a piece of metrical bombast, published by Mr. Disraeli a generation before, and forgotten by almost all the living. Mr. Disraeli, however, declared that he attached great importance to the charge made against him, and

that he felt bound to refute it by more than a mere denial. He, therefore, published a new edition of the poem, which he dedicated to Lord Stanley, in order to settle the controversy. 'I have, therefore, thought it,' he explains, 'the simplest course, and one which might save me trouble hereafter, to publish the "Revolutionary Epick." It is printed from the only copy in my possession, and which, with slight exceptions, was corrected in 1837, when, after three years' reflection, I had resolved not only to correct, but to complete the work. The corrections are purely literary.' The poem thus republished seemed more a literary curiosity than a work of art. It had a preface which was positively grotesque in its grandiloquence. 'It was on the plains of Troy,' the writer informed the world, 'that I first conceived the idea of this work.' On that interesting spot it seems to have occurred to him for the first time that 'the most heroick incident of an heroick age produced in the Iliad an Heroick Epick; thus the consolidation of the most superb of empires produced in the Æneid a Political Epick; the revival of learning and the birth of vernacular genius presented us in the Divine Comedy with a National Epick; and the Reformation and its consequences called from the rapt lyre of Milton a Religious Epick.' Then the author naturally was led to ask, should the spirit of his time 'alone be uncelebrated?' As naturally came the answer, that the spirit of Mr. Disraeli's time ought to be celebrated; and that Mr. Disraeli was the man to celebrate it. 'Standing upon Asia and gazing upon Europe,' the inspiration descended on him. 'For me,' he exclaimed, 'remains the Revolutionary Epick.' There was so much of the youth, not to say of the schoolboy, in these bursts of extraordinary eloquence, that no one could have thought of making any serious accusation against Mr. Disraeli in his graver days, even if the pages of such a poem had been enlivened by some nonsense about tyrannicide. The work, as reprinted, certainly contained no passage to show that the young writer entertained any such opinions. Unfortunately, however, it was found that in the republication the questionable passages had somehow undergone a process of alteration. Very few copies of the original edition were in existence. But the British Museum treasured one, and from this it was found that the new version was not quite the same as the original. Thus in the new edition, published specially for the purpose of repelling the charge about tyrannicide, the lines about Brutus were very harmless:—

> Rome's strong career
> Was mine; the blow cold Brutus struck, her fate.

But in the original edition it ran thus to a much more audacious note:—

> The spirit of her strong career was mine;
> And the bold Brutus but propelled the blow
> Her own and nature's laws alike approved.

There were other slight modifications, too, into which it is not necessary to enter. Enough has been said to show that, by what we must suppose to have been some unlucky accident, Mr. Disraeli came to publish as a final and complete refutation of the charge founded upon his 'Revolutionary Epick' a version of that work which was altered from the original in several passages, and in the passage most important of all. We have spoken of a charge made against Mr. Disraeli; but that is giving by far too serious a name to the good-humoured statement made by Mr. Bright. Neither Mr. Bright nor anyone else supposed for a moment that Mr. Disraeli ever seriously approved of regicide. Neither Mr. Bright nor anyone else would have thought of holding Mr. Disraeli gravely responsible for some youthful rhodomontades published in a forgotten attempt at poetry. All that Mr. Bright apparently meant to say was: 'Don't be too rigid in censuring the incautious utterances of men's early and foolish years. Did not you yourself, in a poem published thirty years ago, talk some nonsense about nature's approval of tyrannicide?' The only seriousness given to the matter was when Mr. Disraeli published the new edition for the purpose of finally repudiating the charge, and the new edition was found to have the peculiar passages altered. That was unlucky. If Mr. Disraeli printed from the only copy in his possession, and which he had corrected after three years' reflection, it still was a pity he did not leave the disputed passages uncorrected, or restore them to their original shape. The question was not whether after three years' reflection Mr. Disraeli was entitled to alter in 1837 what he had published in 1834. The question was only as to what he had published in 1834. Nor is it easy to understand how, considering what the controversy was about, he could have regarded the corrections as purely literary. We are bound to say, however, that the incident did Mr. Disraeli no particular harm. The English public has always been curiously unwilling to take Mr. Disraeli seriously. The great majority laughed at the whole thing, and made no further account of it.

There were some rising men on the Tory side. Sir Hugh Cairns, afterwards Lord Chancellor and a peer, had fought his way by sheer talent and energy into the front rank of Opposition. A lawyer from Belfast, and the son of middle-class parents, he had risen into celebrity and influence while yet he was in the very prime of life. He was a lawyer whose knowledge of his own craft might fairly be called profound. He was one of the most effective debaters in Parliament. His resources of telling argument were almost inexhaustible, and his training at the bar

gave him the faculty of making the best at the shortest notice of all the facts he was able to bring to bear on any question of controversy. He showed more than once that he was capable of pouring out an animated and even a passionate invective. An orator in the highest sense he certainly was not. No gleam of imagination softened or brightened his lithe and nervous logic. No deep feeling animated and inspired it. His speeches were arguments not eloquence; instruments not literature. But he was on the whole the greatest political lawyer since Lyndhurst; and he was probably a sounder lawyer than Lyndhurst. He had above all things skill and discretion. He could do much for the aboriginal Tories, if we may use such a word, which they could not do of or for themselves; and his appearance in the front rank of Conservatism made it much more formidable than it was before. Like Mr. Disraeli himself, however, Sir Hugh Cairns was an imported auxiliary of Toryism. The Conservative party had always to retain their foreign legion, as the French kings had their Scottish archers, their Swiss guard, or their Irish brigade. In the House of Commons there were very few genuine English Tories capable of sustaining with Mr. Disraeli the brunt of debate. The Conservative leader's most effective adjutants were men like Sir Hugh Cairns, an Irish lawyer; Mr. Whiteside, a voluble, eloquent, sometimes rather boisterous speaker, also an Irishman and a lawyer; Mr. Seymour Fitzgerald, a clever Irishman, who had at least been called to the bar. Sir Stafford Northcote was a man of ability, who had had an excellent financial training under no less a teacher than Mr. Gladstone himself. But Sir Stafford Northcote, although a fluent speaker, was not a great debater, and, moreover, he had but little of the genuine Tory in him. He was a man of far too modern a spirit and training to be a genuine Tory. He was not one whit more Conservative than most of the Whigs. Mr. Gathorne Hardy, afterwards Lord Cranbrook, was a man of ingrained Tory instincts rather than convictions. He was a powerful speaker of the rattling declamatory kind; fluent as the sand in an hour-glass is fluent; stirring as the roll of a drum is stirring; sometimes dry as the sand and empty as the drum. A man of far higher ability and of really great promise was Lord Robert Cecil, afterwards Lord Cranborne, and now Marquis of Salisbury. Lord Robert Cecil was at this time the ablest scion of noble Toryism in the House of Commons. He was younger than Lord Stanley, and he had not Lord Stanley's solidity, caution, or political information. But he had more originality; he had brilliant ideas; he was ready in debate; and he had a positive genius for saying bitter things in the bitterest tone. The younger son of a great peer, he had at one time no apparent chance of succeeding to the title and the estates. He had accepted honourable

poverty, and was glad to help out his means by the use of his very clever pen. He wrote in several publications, it was said; especially in the *Quarterly Review*, the time-honoured and somewhat time-worn organ of Toryism; and after a while certain political articles in the *Quarterly* came to be identified with his name. He was an ultra-Tory; a Tory on principle, who would hear of no compromise. One great object of his political writings appeared to be to denounce Mr. Disraeli, his titular leader, and to warn the party against him. For a long time he was disliked by most persons in the House of Commons. His gestures were ungainly; his voice was singularly unmusical and harsh; and the extraordinary and wanton bitterness of his tongue set the ordinary listeners against him. He seemed to take a positive delight in being gratuitously offensive. One night during the session of 1862 he attacked Mr. Gladstone's financial policy, and likened it to the practice of 'a pettifogging attorney.' This was felt to be somewhat coarse, and there were many murmurs of disapprobation. Lord Robert Cecil cared as little for disapprobation or decorum as the son of Tisander in the story told by Herodotus, and he went on with his speech unheeding. Next night, when the debate was resumed, Lord Robert rose and said he feared he had on the previous evening uttered some words which might give offence, and which he felt that he could not justify. There were murmurs of encouraging applause; the House of Commons admires nothing more than an unsolicited and manly apology. He had, Lord Robert went on to say, compared the policy of Mr. Gladstone to the practice of a pettifogging attorney. That was language which on cooler consideration he felt that he ought not to have used, and therefore he begged leave to tender his sincere apology —to the attorneys. There was something so wanton, something so nearly approaching to mere buffoonery in conduct like this, that many men found themselves unable to recognise the really high intellectual qualities that were hidden behind that curious mask of offensive cynicism. Lord Robert Cecil, therefore, although a genuine Tory, or perhaps because he was a genuine Tory, could not as yet be looked upon as a man likely to render great service to his party. He was just as likely to turn against them at some moment of political importance. He would not fall in with the discipline of the party; he would not subject his opinions or his caprices to its supposed interests. He was not made to swear in the words of the leader who then guided the party in the House of Commons. Some men on his own side of the House disliked him. Many feared him; some few admired him; no one regarded him as a trustworthy party man. At this period of its career, as at almost all others, Toryism, as a Parliamentary party, lived and won its occasional successes by the guidance and the services of brilliant outsiders. Had it been left to the leadership of genuine

Tories it would probably have come to an end long before. At this particular time to which we have now conducted it, it lived and looked upon the earth, had hope of triumph and gains, had a present and a future, only because it allowed itself to be led by men whom it sometimes distrusted; whom, according to some of its own legitimate princelings, it ought to have always disavowed.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE TROUBLES IN JAMAICA.

Demosthenes once compared the policy of the Athenians to the manner in which a barbarian boxes. When the barbarian receives a blow his attention is at once turned to the part which has got the stroke, and he hastens to defend it. When he receives another blow in another place his hand is there just too late to stop it. But he never seems to have any idea beforehand of what he is to expect or whither his attention ought to be directed. The immense variety of imperial, foreign, and colonial interests that England has got involved in compels a reader of English history, and indeed often compels an English statesman, to find himself in much the same condition as this barbarian boxer. It is impossible to know from moment to moment whither the attention will next have to be turned. Lord Russell's Government had hardly come into power before they found themselves compelled to illustrate this truth. They had scarcely been installed when it was found that some troublesome business awaited them, and that the trouble as usual had risen in a wholly unthought-of quarter. For some weeks there was hardly anything talked of, we might almost say hardly anything thought of, in England, but the story of the rebellion that had taken place in the island of Jamaica, and the manner in which it had been suppressed and punished. The first story came from English officers and soldiers who had themselves helped to crush or to punish the supposed rebellion. All that the public here could gather from the first narratives that found their way into print was, that a negro insurrection had broken out in Jamaica, and that it had been promptly crushed; but that its suppression seemed to have been accompanied by a very carnival of cruelty on the part of the soldiers and their volunteer auxiliaries. Some of the letters sent home reeked with blood. Every writer seemed anxious to accredit himself with the most monstrous deeds of cruelty. Accounts were given of *battues* of negroes as if they had been game. Englishmen told with exulting glee of the number of floggings they had ordered or inflicted; of the huts they had burnt down; of the men and women they had hanged. 'I visited,' wrote an English officer to his superior, 'several

estates and villages. I burnt seven houses in all, but did not even see a rebel. On returning to Golden Grove in the evening, sixty-seven prisoners had been sent in by the Maroons. I disposed of as many as possible, but was too tired to continue after dark. On the morning of the 24th, I started for Morant Bay, having first flogged four and hung six rebels. I beg to state that I did not meet a single man upon the road up to Keith Hall; there were a few prisoners here, all of whom I flogged, and then proceeded to Johnstown and Beckford. At the latter place I burned seven houses and one meeting house; in the former four houses.' Another officer writes: 'We made a raid with thirty men; flogging nine men and burning their negro houses. We held a court-martial on the prisoners, who amounted to about fifty or sixty. Several were flogged without court-martial, from a simple examination.' Then the writer quietly added: 'This is a picture of martial law. The soldiers enjoy it; the inhabitants here dread it. If they run on their approach, they are shot for running away.' It will be seen that in these letters there is no question of contending with or suppressing an insurrection. The insurrection, such as it was, had been suppressed. The writers only give a description of a sort of hunting expedition among the negro inhabitants for the purpose of hanging and flogging. The soldiers are pictured as enjoying the work; the inhabitants, strange to say, are observed to dread it. Their dread would seem to have been unfortunate, although certainly not unnatural; for if they ran away at the approach of the soldiers, the soldiers shot them for their want of confidence. It also became known that a coloured member of the Jamaica House of Assembly, a man named George William Gordon, who was suspected of inciting the rebellion, and had surrendered himself at Kingston, was put on board an English war vessel there, taken to Morant Bay, where martial law had been proclaimed, tried by a sort of drumhead court-martial, and instantly hanged.

Such news naturally created a profound sensation in England. The Aborigines' Protection Society, the Anti-Slavery Society, and other philanthropic bodies, organised a deputation, immense in its numbers, and of great influence as regarded its composition, to wait on Mr. Cardwell, Secretary for the Colonies, at the Colonial Office, and urge on him the necessity of instituting a full enquiry and re-calling Governor Eyre. The deputation was so numerous that it had to be received in a great public room, and indeed the whole scene was more like that presented by some large popular meeting than by a deputation to a minister. Mr. Cardwell was so fortunate as to discover a phrase exactly suitable to the occasion. In the course of his reply to the deputation, he laid it down that everyone must be careful not to 'prejudge' the question. It was pointed out

to him that it can hardly be called prejudging if you take men's own formal and official statements of what they have done, and declare that on their own acknowledgments you are of opinion they have done wrong. The word 'prejudge' carried thousands of uncertain minds along with it. All over the country there was one easy form of protest against the proceedings of the philanthropic societies. It was apparently enough to utter the oracular words 'we must not prejudge.' Mr. Cardwell, however, did so far prejudge the case himself as to suspend Mr. Eyre temporarily from his functions as Governor, and to send out a Commission of Enquiry to investigate the whole history of the rebellion and the repression, and to report to the Government. Sir Henry Storks, a man of great ability and high reputation, both as soldier and administrator, who had been Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, was summoned from Malta, where he was then Governor and Commander-in-Chief, to take the Governorship of Jamaica for the time, and to act as President of the Commission. He had associated with him Mr. Russell Gurney, Recorder of London, a lawyer of high standing and a distinguished member of Parliament; and Mr. J. B. Maule, Recorder of Leeds. The philanthropic associations which had taken up the question sent out two barristers to act as counsel for the widowed Mrs. Gordon during the investigation: Mr. Gorrie, afterwards Chief Justice of the Fiji Islands, and Mr. J. Horne Payne. The Commission held a very long and careful enquiry. No one could question either the ability or the impartiality of the Commissioners. There was a general disposition to receive any report they might make as authoritative and decisive. Meanwhile, however, it need hardly be said that there was no disposition to wait for the story of all that had happened until the Commission should have got through its patient enquiries and presented its formal report. The English public have long learned to look to the newspaper press as not only the quickest, but on the whole the most accurate, source of intelligence in all matters of public interest. In this case, as in most others, the newspapers differed in their judgment as to the conduct of the principal actors in the drama; but, in this case, as in all others of late years, each newspaper endeavoured to give a correct representation of the facts. Many wild exaggerations had found their way into some newspapers. These came from private letters. It sometimes happened that men who had been engaged in putting down the insurrection represented themselves as having done deeds of savage vengeance of which they were not really guilty. In some instances it actually turned out that Mr. Cardwell's appeal to the public not to prejudge was warranted even where men deliberately affirmed themselves to have committed the acts which made people at home shudder and exclaim. Such seemed to

have been the fervour of repression in Jamaica, that persons were found eager to claim an undue share of its honours by ascribing to themselves detestable excesses which in point of fact they had not committed. It is needless to say that there was exaggeration on the other side, and that affrighted coloured people in Jamaica sent forth wild rumours of wholesale massacre which would have been impossible, even in the high fever of repression. As the letters of the accredited correspondents of the newspapers began to arrive, the true state of affairs gradually disclosed itself. There was no substantial discrepancy as to the facts; and the report of the Commissioners themselves, when it was received, did not add much to the materials for forming a judgment which the public already possessed, nor probably did it alter many opinions of many men. The history of the events in Jamaica, told in whatever way, must form a sad and shocking narrative. The history of this generation has no such tale to tell where any race of civilised and Christian men was concerned. Had the repression been justifiable in all its details; had the fearful vengeance taken on the wretched island been absolutely necessary to its future tranquillity, it still would have been a chapter of history to read with a shudder. It will be seen, however, that excesses were committed which could not possibly plead the excuse of necessity; that some deeds were done which most moralists would say no human authority could warrant, or human peril justify.

Jamaica had long been in a more or less disturbed condition; at least, it had long been liable to periodical fits of disturbance. We have already described in this history some of the difficulties occasioned by the condition of things existing in the island. When giving an account of the Jamaica Bill during the Melbourne administration, it was mentioned that the troubles then existing were in fact a survival of the slave system. So were the troubles of 1865. 'I suppose there is no island or place in the world,' said Chief Justice Cockburn in his celebrated charge to the Grand Jury at the Central Criminal Court, in 1867, 'in which there has been so much of insurrection and disorder as the island of Jamaica. There is no place in which the curse which attaches to slavery, both as regards the master and the slave, has been more strikingly illustrated.' What we may call the planter class still continued to look on the negroes as an inferior race, hardly entitled to any legal rights. The negroes were naturally only too ready to listen to any denunciations of the planter class, and to put faith in any agitation which promised to secure them some property in the land. The negroes had undoubtedly some serious grievances. It may be that some of the wrongs they complained of were imaginary or were exaggerated. But it is a very safe rule in politics to assume that no

population is ever disturbed by wholly imaginary grievances. In such cases, unquestionably, where there is smoke there is fire. Man is by far too lazy an animal to trouble himself much with agitation about purely unreal and non-existing wrongs. The negroes of Jamaica had some very substantial wrongs. They constantly complained that they could not get justice administered to them when any dispute arose between white and black. The Government had found that there was some ground for complaints of this kind at the time when it was proposed by the Jamaica Bill to suspend the constitution of the island. Perhaps if the Melbourne Ministry had been stronger and inspired by greater earnestness of purpose at that time, the calamities and shames of 1865 might have been avoided. In 1865, however, the common causes of dissatisfaction were freshly and further complicated by a dispute about what were called the 'back lands.' This was a question which might under certain circumstances have arisen in Ireland; at least it will be easily understood by those who are acquainted with the condition of Ireland. Lands belonging to some of the great estates in Jamaica had been allowed to run out of cultivation. They were so neglected by their owners that they were turning into mere bush. The quit-rents due on them to the Crown had not been paid for seven years. The negroes were told that if they paid the arrears of quit-rent they might cultivate these lands and enjoy them free of rent. It may be remarked that the tendency in Jamaica had almost always hitherto been for the Crown officials to take the part of the negroes, and for the Jamaica authorities to side with the local magnates. Trusting to the assurance given, some of the negroes paid the arrears of quit-rent and brought the land into cultivation. The agent of one of the estates, however, reasserted the right of his principal, who had not been a consenting party to the arrangement, and he endeavoured to evict the negro occupiers of the land. The negroes resisted, and legal proceedings were instituted to turn them out. The legal proceedings were still pending when the events took place which gave occasion to so much controversy. Jamaica was in an unquiet state. 'Within the land,' as in the territory of the chiefs round Lara's castle, 'was many a malcontent, who cursed the tyranny to which he bent.' There, too, 'Frequent broil within had made a path for blood and giant sin, that waited but a signal to begin new havoc such as civil discord blends.' On October 7, 1865, some disturbances took place on the occasion of a magisterial meeting at Morant Bay, a small town on the south-east corner of the island. The negroes appeared to be in an excited state, and many persons believed that an outbreak was at hand. An application was made to the Governor for military assistance. The Governor of Jamaica was Mr. Edward John Eyre, who had been a successful explorer in Central,

West, and Southern Australia, had acted as resident magistrate and protector of aborigines in the region of the Lower Murray in Australia, and had afterwards been Lieutenant-Governor of New Zealand, of the Leeward Islands, and of other places. All Mr. Eyre's dealings with native races up to this time would seem to have earned for him the reputation of a just and humane man. The Governor despatched a small military force by sea to the scene of the expected disturbances. Warrants had been issued meanwhile by the Custos or chief magistrate of the parish in which Morant Bay is situated, for the arrest of some of the persons who had taken part in the previous disturbances—which, it may be stated, had for their object the rescue of a man on trial for a trifling offence. When the warrants were about to be put into execution, resistance by force was offered. In particular, the attempt to arrest a leading negro agitator, named Paul Bogle, was strenuously and successfully opposed. The police were overpowered, and some were beaten, and others compelled to swear that they would not interfere with the negroes. On the 11th the negroes, armed with sticks, and the 'cutlasses' used in the work of the sugar-cane fields, assembled in considerable numbers in the square of the Court House in Morant Bay. The magistrates were holding a meeting there. The mob made for the Court House; the local volunteer force came to the help of the magistrates. The Riot Act was being read when some stones were thrown. The volunteers fired, and some negroes were seen to fall. Then the rioters attacked the Court House. The volunteers were few in number, and were easily overpowered; the Court House was set on fire; eighteen persons, the Custos among them, were killed, and about thirty were wounded; and a sort of incoherent insurrection suddenly spread itself over the neighbourhood. The moment, however, that the soldiers sent by the Governor, at first only one hundred in number, arrived upon the scene of disturbance, the insurrection collapsed and vanished. There never was the slightest attempt made by the rioters to keep the field against the troops. The soldiers had not in a single instance to do any fighting. The only business left for them was to hunt out supposed rebels and bring them before the military tribunals. So evanescent was the whole movement that it is to this day a matter of dispute whether there was any rebellion at all, properly so called; whether there was any organised attempt at insurrection; or whether the disturbances were not the extemporaneous work of a discontented and turbulent mob, whose rush to rescue some of their friends expanded suddenly into an effort to wreak old grievances on the nearest representatives of authority.

On October 13, the Governor proclaimed the whole of the county of Surrey, with the exception of the city of Kingston, under martial law.

Jamaica is divided into three counties: Surrey covering the eastern and southern portion, including the region of the Blue Mountains, the towns of Port Antonio and Morant Bay, and the considerable city of Kingston, with its population of some thirty thousand. Middlesex comprehends the central part of the island, and contains Spanish Town, then the seat of Government. The western part of the island is the county of Cornwall. At this time Jamaica was ruled by the Governor and Council, and the House of Assembly. The Council was composed of twelve persons, nominated, like the Governor, by the Crown; and the House of Assembly consisted of forty-five members elected by the freeholders of each parish. The Council had the place of an Upper House; the Assembly was the Representative Chamber. Among the members of the Assembly was a coloured man of some education and property, George William Gordon. Gordon was a Baptist by religion, and had in him a good deal of the fanatical earnestness of the field-preacher. He was a vehement agitator and a devoted advocate of what he considered to be the rights of the negroes. He appears to have had a certain amount of eloquence, partly of the conventicle and partly of the stump. He was just the sort of man to make himself a nuisance to white colonists and officials who wanted to have everything their own way. Indeed, he belonged to that order of men who are almost sure to be always found in opposition to officialism of any kind. Such a man may do mischief sometimes, but it is certain that out of his very restlessness and troublesomeness he often does good. No really sensible politician would like to see a Legislative Assembly of any kind without some men of the type of Gordon representing the check of perpetual opposition. On the other hand, Gordon was exactly the sort of person in the treatment of whom a wise authority would be particularly cautious, in order not to allow its own prejudices to operate to his injury and the injury of political justice together. Gordon was in constant disputes with the authorities, and with Governor Eyre himself. He had been a magistrate, but was dismissed from the magistracy in consequence of the alleged violence of his language in making accusations against another justice. He had taken some part in getting up meetings of the coloured population; he had made many appeals to the Colonial Office in London against this or that act on the part of the Governor or the Council, or both. He had been appointed churchwarden, but was declared disqualified for the office in consequence of his having become a 'Native Baptist;' and he had brought an action to recover what he held to be his rights. He had come to hold the position of champion of the rights and claims of the black man against the white. He was a sort of constitutional Opposition in himself. The Governor seems to have at once adopted the conclusion urged on him by others, that Gordon was at the bottom of the

insurrectionary movement. In the historical sense he may no doubt be regarded as in some measure the cause of any disturbance, whether insurrectionary or not, which broke out. A man who tells people they are wronged is to that extent the cause of any disturbance which may come of an attempt to get their wrongs righted. A great many persons declared that Fox was the author of the Irish rebellion of 1798, because he had helped to show that the Irish people had wrongs. In this sense every man who agitates for reform anywhere is responsible should any rebellious movement take place; and the only good citizen is he who approves of all that is done by authority, and never uplifts the voice of opposition to anything. Gordon was a very energetic agitator, and he probably had some sense of self-importance in his agitation; but we entirely agree with Chief Justice Cockburn in believing that, 'so far from there being any evidence to prove that Mr. Gordon intended this insurrection and rebellion, the evidence, as well as the probability of the case, appears to be exactly the other way.' There does not seem to have been one particle of evidence to connect Gordon with a rebellious movement more than there would have been to condemn Mr. Bright as a promoter of rebellion, if the working men of the Reform period, soon to be mentioned in this history, had been drawn into some fatal conflict with the police. In each case it might have been said that only for the agitator who denounced the supposed grievance all would have been quiet; and in neither case was there anything more to be said which could connect the agitator with the disturbance. Mr. Eyre and his advisers, however, had made up their minds that Gordon was the leader of a rebellious conspiracy. They took a course with regard to him which could hardly be excused if he were the self-confessed leader of as formidable a conspiracy as ever endangered the safety of a State.

We have mentioned the fact, that in proclaiming the county of Surrey under martial law, Mr. Eyre had specially excepted the city of Kingston. Mr. Gordon lived near Kingston, and had a place of business in the city; and he seems to have been there attending to his business, as usual, during the days while the disturbances were going on. The Governor ordered a warrant to be issued for Gordon's arrest. When this fact became known to Gordon, he went to the house of the General in command of the Forces at Kingston and gave himself up. The Governor had him put at once on board a war steamer, and conveyed to Morant Bay. Having given himself up in a place where martial law did not exist, where the ordinary courts were open, and where, therefore, he would have been tried with all the forms and safeguards of the civil law, he was purposely carried away to a place which had been put under martial law. Here an extraordinary sort of court-martial was sitting. It was composed of two young navy lieutenants and

an ensign in one of her Majesty's West India regiments. Gordon was hurried before this grotesque tribunal, charged with high treason, found guilty, and sentenced to death. The sentence was approved by the officer in command of the troops sent to Morant Bay. It was then submitted to the Governor, and approved by him also. It was carried into effect without much delay. The day following Gordon's conviction was Sunday, and it was not thought seemly to hang a man on the Sabbath. He was allowed, therefore, to live over that day. On the morning of Monday, October 23, Gordon was hanged. He bore his fate with great heroism, and wrote just before his death a letter to his wife, which is full of pathos in its simple and dignified manliness. He died protesting his innocence of any share in disloyal conspiracy or insurrectionary purpose.

The whole of the proceedings connected with the trial of Gordon were absolutely illegal: they were illegal from first to last. It is almost impossible to conceive of any transaction more entirely unlawful. Every step in it was a separate outrage on law. But for its tragic end the whole affair would seem to belong to the domain of burlesque rather than to that of sober history. The act which conveyed Mr. Gordon from the protection of civil law to the authority of a drumhead court-martial was grossly illegal. The tribunal was constituted in curious defiance of law and precedent. It is contrary to all authority to form a court-martial by mixing together the officers of the two different services. It was an unauthorised tribunal, however, even if considered as only a military court-martial, or only a naval court-martial. Whatever way we take it, it was irregular and illegal. It would have been so had all its members been soldiers, or had all been sailors. Care seemed to have been taken so to constitute it that it must in any case be illegal. The prisoner thus brought by unlawful means before an illegal tribunal was tried upon testimony taken in ludicrous opposition to all the rules of evidence. Chief Justice Cockburn says: 'After the most careful perusal of the evidence which was adduced against him, I come irresistibly to the conclusion that if the man had been tried upon that evidence'—and here the Chief Justice checked himself and said: 'I must correct myself. He could not have been tried upon that evidence; I was going too far, a great deal too far, in assuming that he could. He could not have been tried upon that evidence. No competent judge acquainted with the duties of his office could have received that evidence. Three-fourths, I had almost said nine-tenths, of the evidence upon which that man was convicted and sentenced to death, was evidence which, according to no known rules—not only of ordinary law, but of military law—according to no rules of right or justice could possibly have been admitted; and it never would have been admitted if a com-

petent judge had presided, or if there had been the advantage of a military officer of any experience in the practice of courts-martial.' Such as the evidence was, however, compounded of scraps of the paltriest hearsay, and of things said when the prisoner was not present; of depositions made apparently to supplement evidence given before, and not thought strong enough; strengthened probably in the hope of thus purchasing the safety of the witnesses, and on which the witnesses were never cross-examined—such as the evidence was, supposing it admissible, supposing it trustworthy, supposing it true beyond all possibility of question, yet the Chief Justice was convinced that it testified rather to the innocence than to the guilt of the prisoner. By such a court, on such evidence, Gordon was put to death.

Meanwhile the carnival of repression was going on. The insurrection, or whatever the movement was which broke out on October 11, was over long before. It never offered the slightest resistance to the soldiers. It never showed itself to them. An armed insurgent was never seen by them. Nevertheless, for weeks after, the hangings, the floggings, the burnings of houses, were kept up. Men were hanged, women were flogged merely 'suspect of being suspect.' Many were flogged or hanged for no particular reason but that they happened to come in the way of men who were in a humour for flogging and hanging. Women—to be sure they were only coloured women—were stripped and scourged by the saviours of society with all the delight which a savage village population of the Middle Ages might have felt in torturing witches. The report of the Royal Commissioners stated that 439 persons were put to death, and that over six hundred, including many women, were flogged, some under circumstances of revolting cruelty. Cats made of piano-wire were in some instances used for the better effect of flagellation. Some of the scourges were shown to the Commissioners, who observe that it is 'painful to think that any man should have used such an instrument for the torturing of his fellow-creatures.' The Commissioners summed up their Report by declaring that the punishments inflicted were excessive; that the punishment of death was unnecessarily frequent; that the floggings were reckless, and in some cases positively barbarous; that the burning of one thousand houses was wanton and cruel.' The fury at last spent itself. *Lassata necdum satiata.*

When the story reached England in clear and trustworthy form, two antagonistic parties were instantly formed. The extreme on the one side glorified Governor Eyre, and held that by his prompt action he had saved the white population of Jamaica from all the horrors of triumphant negro insurrection. The extreme on the other side denounced him as a mere fiend. The majority on both sides were more reasonable; but the differ-

ence between them was only less wide. An association called the Jamaica Committee was formed for the avowed purpose of seeing that justice was done. It comprised some of the most illustrious Englishmen. Men became members of that committee who had never taken part in public agitation of any kind before. Another association was founded, on the opposite side, for the purpose of sustaining Governor Eyre, and it must be owned that it too had great names. Mr. Mill may be said to have led the one side, and Mr. Carlyle the other. The natural bent of each man's genius and temper turned him to the side of the Jamaica negroes, or of the Jamaica Governor. Mr. Tennyson, Mr. Kingsley, Mr. Ruskin, followed Mr. Carlyle; we know now that Mr. Dickens was of the same way of thinking. Mr. Herbert Spencer, Professor Huxley, Mr. Goldwin Smith, were in agreement with Mr. Mill. We have purposely omitted the names of politicians, whom any reader can range without difficulty according to his knowledge of their career and ways of thinking. No one needs to be told that Mr. Bright took the side of the oppressed, and Mr. Disraeli that of authority. The case on either side may be briefly stated. We put out of consideration altogether the position taken up by only too many of those who proclaimed themselves advocates of Mr. Eyre, and who volunteered a line of defence on his behalf for which he would probably have given them little thanks. That was what some one at the time in blunt expressive words described as the 'damned nigger' principle; the principle that any sort of treatment is good enough for negroes, and generally speaking serves them right. This kind of argument was very effective among considerable classes of persons, but it was not allowed to make its appearance much in public debate. In the House of Commons it never, at all events, got higher than the smoking-room; the reporters in the gallery were not allowed any opportunity of recording it. Perhaps, on the other side, we may fairly put out of our consideration the view of those who, having from the most benevolent motives identified themselves all their lives long with the cause of oppressed negroes, fell instinctively and at once into the ranks of any movement professing to defend a negro population. The more reasonable of those who supported Mr. Eyre did not concern themselves to vindicate the legality or even the justice of all that he had done. Lord Carnarvon, the new Colonial Secretary, frankly admitted that in his opinion acts of cruelty and injustice had been done during and after the rebellion. Many were quite willing to admit that the trial of Gordon had been irregular, and that his hasty execution was to be deplored. What they did contend was, that at a terrible crisis Mr. Eyre did the best he could; that he was confronted with the fearful possibility of a negro insurrection, where the whites were not one in twenty of the

blacks, and where a moment's success to the rebels might have put the life of every white man, and the honour of every white woman, at the mercy of furious mobs of savage negroes. 'Say what you will,' they urged, 'he stamped out the rebellion. He acted illegally, because there was no time for being legal. He sanctioned unmerciful deeds, because he had to choose between mercy to murderous blacks and mercy to loyal and innocent whites. You complain of the flogging of black women; he was thinking of the honour and the lives of white women. He crushed the rebellion utterly; he positively frightened it into submission. He was dealing with savages; he took the only steps which could have saved the loyal people he had in charge from an orgy of cruelty and licentiousness. Had he stayed his hand a moment all was lost. Many things were done which we deplore; which we would not have done; which he would not have done, or sanctioned, if there were time to balance claims and consider nicely individual rights. But he saved the white population, and put down the insurrection; and we feel gratitude to him first of all.'

Such is, we think, a fair statement of the case relied upon by the more reasonable of the defenders of Mr. Eyre. To this the opposite party answered that in fact the insurrection, supposing it to have been an insurrection, was all over before the floggings, the hangings, and the burnings set in. Not merely were the troops masters of the field, but there was no armed enemy anywhere to be seen in the field or out of it. They contended that men are not warranted in inflicting wholesale and hideous punishments merely in order to strike such terror as may prevent the possibility of any future disturbance. As an illustration of the curious ethical principles which the hour called forth, it may be mentioned that one of the best-instructed and ablest of the London journals distinctly contended that excess of punishment would be fully justified as a means of preventing further outbreaks. 'Consider,' such was the argument, 'what the horrors of a successful outbreak in Jamaica might be, or even of an outbreak successful for a few days; consider what blood its repression would cost even to the negroes themselves; and then say whether anyone ought to shrink from inflicting a few superfluous floggings and hangings if these would help to strike terror, and make new rebellion impossible? Even the flogging of women—disagreeable work, no doubt, for English soldiers to have to do—if it struck terror into their husbands and brothers, and thus discouraged rebellion, would it too not be justified?' One cannot better deal with this argument than by pushing it just a little further. Suppose the burning alive of a few women and children seemed likely to have a deterrent effect on disloyal husbands and fathers generally, would it not be well to light the pile? What would the torture and death

of a score or so of women and children be when compared with the bloodshed which such a timely example might avert? Yet any sane man would answer that rather than that he would brave any risk; and so we get to the end of the argument at once. We have only arrived at an acknowledgment of the fact that the repression of insurrection, like everything on earth, has its restraining moral code, which custom and civilisation, if there were nothing else, must be allowed to establish. The right of Englishmen to rule in Jamaica is a right which has to be exercised with, and not without, regard for human feelings and Christian laws. Not a few persons endeavoured to satisfy their own and the public conscience by praising the virtues of Governor Eyre's career, and casting aspersions on the character of the unfortunate Gordon. Professor Huxley disposed once for all of that sort of argument by the quiet remark that he knew of no law authorising virtuous persons as such to put to death less virtuous persons as such.

The Report of the Commissioners was made in April, 1866. It declared in substance that the disturbances had their immediate origin in a planned resistance to authority, arising partly out of a desire to obtain the land free of rent, and partly out of the want of confidence felt by the labouring class in the tribunals by which most of the disputes affecting their interests were decided; that the disturbance spread rapidly, and that Mr. Eyre deserved praise for the skill and vigour with which he had stopped it in the beginning; but that martial law was kept in force too long; that the punishments inflicted were excessive; that the punishment of death was unnecessarily frequent; that the floggings were barbarous, and the burnings wanton and cruel; that although it was probable that Gordon, by his writings and speeches, had done much to bring about excitement and discontent, and thus rendered insurrection possible, yet there was no sufficient proof of his complicity in the outbreak, or in any organised conspiracy against the Government; and, indeed, that there was no widespread conspiracy of any kind. Of course this finished Mr. Eyre's career as a Colonial Governor. A new Governor, Sir J. P. Grant, was sent out to Jamaica, and a new Constitution was given to the island. The Jamaica Committee, however, did not let the matter drop there. They first called upon the Attorney-General to take proceedings against Mr. Eyre and some of his subordinates. The Government had, meanwhile, passed into Conservative hands, in consequence of events which have yet to be told; and the Attorney-General declined to prosecute. Probably a Liberal Attorney-General would have done just the same thing. Then the Jamaica Committee decided on prosecuting Mr. Eyre and his subordinates themselves. They took various proceedings, but in

every case with the same result. We need not go into the history of these proceedings, and the many controversies, legal and otherwise, which they occasioned. The bills of indictment never got beyond the grand jury stage. The grand jury always threw them out. On one memorable occasion the attempt gave the Lord Chief Justice of England an opportunity of delivering the charge to the grand jury from which we have already cited some passages: a charge entitled to the rank of an historical declaration of the law of England, and the limits of the military power even in cases of insurrection. Mr. Carlyle found great fault with the Chief Justice for having merely laid down the law of England. 'Lordship,' he wrote, 'if you were to speak for six hundred years, instead of six hours, you would only prove the more to us that, unwritten if you will, but real and fundamental, anterior to all written laws and first making written laws possible, there must have been, and is, and will be, coeval with human society from its first beginnings to its ultimate end, an actual martial-law of more validity than any other law whatever.' The business of the Lord Chief Justice, however, was not to go in philosophical quest of those higher laws of which Mr. Carlyle assumed to be the interpreter. His was the humbler but more practical part to expound the laws of England, and he did his duty.

The prosecutions can hardly be said to have been without use which gave opportunity for this most important exposition from such high authority. But they had no effect as against Mr. Eyre. Even the Chief Justice, who exposed with such just severity the monstrous misuse of power which had been seen in Jamaica, still left it to the grand jury to say whether after all—considering the state of things that prevailed in the island, the sudden danger, the consternation, and the confusion—the proceedings of the authorities, however mistaken, were not done honestly and faithfully in what was believed to be the proper administration of justice. After many discussions in Parliament, the Government in 1872—once again a Liberal Government—decided on paying Mr. Eyre the expenses to which he had been put in defending himself against the various prosecutions; and the House of Commons, after a long debate, agreed to the vote by a large majority. The Jamaica Committee were denounced by many voices, and in very unmeasured language, for what they had done. Yet no public body ever were urged on to an unpopular course by purer motives than those which influenced Mr. Mill and his associates. They were filled with the same spirit of generous humanity which animated Burke when he pressed the impeachment against Warren Hastings. They were sustained by a desire to secure the rights of British subjects for a despised and maltreated negro population. They were

inspired with a longing to cleanse the name of England from the stain of a share in the abominations of that unexampled repression. Yet we do not think, on the whole, that there was any failure of justice. A career full of bright promise was cut short for Mr. Eyre, and for some of his subordinates as well; and no one accused Mr. Eyre personally of anything worse than a fury of mistaken zeal. The deeds which were done by his authority, or to which, when they were done, he gave his authority's sanction, were branded with such infamy that it is almost impossible such things could ever be done again in England's name. Even those who excused under the circumstances the men by whom the deeds were done, had seldom a word to say in defence of the acts themselves. The cruelties of that saturnalia of vengeance are absolutely without parallel in the history of our times; perhaps the very horror they inspired, the very shame of the few arguments employed to defend them, may make for mercy in the future. The one strong argument for severity, on which so many relied when upholding the acts of Mr. Eyre, is curiously confuted by the history of Jamaica itself. That argument was, that severity of an extraordinary kind was necessary to prevent the repetition of rebellion. Rigour of repression had been tried long enough in Jamaica without producing any such effect. During one hundred and fifty years there had been about thirty insurrections, in some of which the measures of repression employed were sweeping and stern enough to have shaken the nerves of a Couthon and disturbed the conscience of a Claverhouse. The Chief Justice declared that there was not a stone in the island of Jamaica which, if the rains of heaven had not washed off from it the stains of blood, might not have borne terrible witness to the manner in which martial law had been exercised for the suppression of native discontent. The deeds, therefore, that were done under the authority of Mr. Eyre found no plea to excuse them in the history of the past. Such policy had been tried again and again, and had failed. The man who tried it again in 1865 undertook the responsibility of defying the authority of experience, as well as that of constitutional and moral law.

CHAPTER L.

DRIVEN BACK ACROSS THE RUBICON.

The Queen opened the new Parliament in person. She then performed the ceremony for the first time since the death of the Prince Consort. The speech from the throne contained a paragraph which announced that her

Majesty had directed that information should be procured in reference to the right of voting in the election of members of Parliament, and that when the information was complete, 'the attention of Parliament will be called to the result thus obtained, with a view to such improvements in the laws which regulate the right of voting in the election of members of the House of Commons as may tend to strengthen our free institutions and conduce to the public welfare.' Some announcement on the subject of Reform was expected by everyone. Nobody could have had any doubt that the new Government would at once bring forward some measure to extend the franchise. The only surprise felt was perhaps at the cautious and limited way in which the proposed measure was indicated in the royal speech. Some of the more extreme reformers thought there was something ominous in this way of opening the question. A mere promise to obtain information on the subject of the franchise appeared to be minimising as much as possible the importance of the whole subject. Besides, it was asked, what information is required more than we have already? Is this to be merely an investigation as to the number of persons whom this or that scale of franchise would add to the constituencies? Is the character of the reform to be decided by the mere addition which it would make to the voters' lists rather than by the political principles which an extended franchise represents? Is there to be what Burke calls 'a low-minded inquisition into numbers,' in order that too many Englishmen should not be allowed the privilege of a vote?

There was something ominous, therefore, in the manner in which the first mention of the new Reform Bill was received, as well as in the terms of the announcement. Many circumstances too made the time unpropitious for such an undertaking. The cattle plague had broken out towards the close of the previous year, and had spread with most alarming rapidity. At the end of 1865 it was announced that about 80,000 cattle had been attacked by the disease, of which some 40,000 had died. From 6,000 to 8,000 animals were dying every week. The Government, the cattle-owners, and the scientific men, were much occupied in devising plans for the restriction of the malady. Some keen controversy had arisen over the Government proposals for making good the losses of the cattle-owners whose animals had to be killed in obedience to official orders to prevent the spread of disease. There were already rumours of the approach of that financial distress which was to break out shortly in disastrous commercial panic. Cholera was believed to be travelling ominously westward. There were threatened disturbances in Ireland and alarms about a gigantic Fenian conspiracy. It did not need to be particularly keen-eyed to foresee that there was likely soon to be a collision of irreconcileable interests on

the Continent. There was uneasiness about Jamaica; there was uneasiness about certain English men and women who were detained as prisoners by Theodore, King of Abyssinia. Moreover the Parliament had only just been elected, and a Reform Bill would mean a speedy dissolution, with a renewal of expense and trouble to the members of the House of Commons. Certainly the time did not seem tempting for a sudden revival of the reform controversy which had been allowed to sleep in a sort of Kyffhaüser cavern during the later years of Lord Palmerston's life.

Many Conservatives did not believe that the studied moderation of the announcement in the Queen's Speech could really be taken as evidence of a moderate intention on the part of the Ministry. While Radicals generally insisted that the strength of the old Whig party, 'the Dukes,' as the phrase went, had been successfully exerted to compel a compromise and keep Mr. Gladstone down, most of the Tories would have it that Mr. Gladstone now had got it all his own way, and that the cautious vagueness of the Queen's Speech would only prove to be the prelude to very decisive and alarming changes in the constitution. Not since the introduction by Lord John Russell of the measure which became law in 1832 had a Reform Bill been expected in England with so much curiosity, with so much alarm, with so much disposition to a foregone conclusion of disappointment. On March 12 Mr. Gladstone introduced the bill. His speech was eloquent; but the House of Commons was not stirred. It was evident at once that the proposed measure was only a compromise; and a compromise of the most unattractive kind. The substance of the Government scheme may be explained in a single sentence. The bill proposed to reduce the county franchise from fifty pounds to fourteen pounds, and the borough franchise from ten to seven pounds. There was a savings bank franchise, and a lodger franchise, but we need not discuss smaller details and qualifying provisions. The borough franchise of course was the central question in any reform measure; and this was to be reduced by three pounds. The man who could be enthusiastic over such a reform must have been a person whose enthusiasm was scarcely worth arousing. The peculiarity of the situation was, that without a genuine popular enthusiasm nothing could be done. The House of Commons as a whole did not want reform. For one obvious reason, the House had only just been elected; members had spent money and taken much trouble; and they did not like the idea of having to encounter the risk and expense all over again almost immediately. All the Conservatives were of course openly and consistently opposed to reform; not a few of the professing Liberals secretly detested it. These latter would accept it and try to put on an appearance of welcoming it if popular excitement and the demeanour

of the Government showed that they must be for it or against it. Only a small number of men in the House were genuine in their anxiety for immediate change; and of these the majority were too earnest and extreme to care for a reform which only meant a reduction of the borough franchise from ten pounds to seven pounds. It seemed a ridiculous anti-climax, after all the indignant eloquence about 'unenfranchised millions,' to come down to a scheme for enfranchising a few hundreds here and there. It was hard for ordinary minds to understand that a ten pounds franchise meant servitude and shame, but a seven pounds franchise was national liberty and salvation. All this for three pounds was a little too much for plain people to comprehend. The bill was founded on no particular principle; it merely said, 'we have at present a certain scale of franchise; let us make it a little lower, and our successors, if they feel inclined, can keep on lowering it.' No well-defined basis was reached; there seemed no reason why, if such a bill had been passed, some politician might not move the session after for a bill to reduce the franchise a pound or two lower. Absolute finality in politics is of course unattainable, but a statesman would do well to see at least that a distinct and secure ledge is reached in his descent. He ought not to be content to slip a little way down to-day, and leave chance to decide whether he may not have to slip a little way further to-morrow.

The announcement made by the Government had only what is called in theatrical circles a *succès d'estime*. Those who believed in the sincerity and high purpose of Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone, and who therefore assumed that if they said this was all they could do there was nothing else to be done—these supported the bill. Mr. Bright supported it; somewhat coldly at first, but afterwards, when warmed by the glow of debate and of opposition, with all his wonted power. It was evident, however, that he was supporting Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone rather than their Reform Bill. Mr. Mill supported the bill; partly no doubt for the same reason, and partly because it had the support of Mr. Bright. But it would have been hard to find anyone who said that he really cared much about the measure itself, or that it was the sort of thing he would have proposed if he had his way. There were public meetings got up of course in support of the bill, and the agitation naturally gathered heat as it went on. Mr. Gladstone became for a time a popular agitator on behalf of his measure, and stumped the country during the Easter holidays. It was during this political campaign that he made the famous speech in Liverpool, in which he announced that the Government had passed the Rubicon; had broken the bridge and burned the boats behind them. He truly had done so. His career was to be thenceforward as the path of an arrow in

the direction of popular reform; but his Government had to recross the Rubicon; to make use of the broken bridge somehow for the purposes of retreat.

Before, however, the delivery of this celebrated speech, the defects of the bill, and the lack of public interest in it, had produced their natural effect in the House of Commons. The moment it was evident that the public, as a whole, were not enthusiastic about the measure, the House of Commons began to feel that it could do as it pleased in the matter. It may seem rather surprising now that the Conservatives, or at least those of them who had foresight enough to know that some manner of change was inevitable, did not accept this trivial and harmless measure, and so have done with the unwelcome subject for some time to come. Many of the Conservatives, however, were not only opposed to all reform of the suffrage on principle, but were still under the firm belief that they could stave it off for their time. Others there were who honestly believed that if a change were inevitable it would be better for the good of the country that it should be something in the nature of a permanent settlement, and that there should not be a periodical revival of agitation incessantly perplexing the public mind. Others, too, no doubt, saw even already that there would be partisan chances secured by embarrassing the Government anyhow. Therefore the Conservatives as a man opposed the measure; but they had allies. Day after day saw new secessions of emboldened Whigs and half-hearted Liberals. The Thanes were flying from the side of the Government. Mr. Gladstone had announced his intention also to bring in a bill dealing with the redistribution of seats; but he preferred to take this after the Reform Bill. At once he was encountered by an amendment from his own side of the House, and from very powerful representatives of Whig family interest, calling on him to take the redistribution scheme at once; to alter the rental to a rating franchise; to do all manner of things calculated to change the nature of the bill, or to interfere with the chances of its being passed into law. The Ministerial side of the House was fast becoming demoralised. The Liberal party was breaking up into mutinous camps and unmanageable coteries.

The fate of this unhappy bill is not now a matter of great historical importance. Far more interesting than the process of its defeat is the memory of the eloquence by which it was assailed and defended. One reputation sprang into light with these memorable debates. Mr. Robert Lowe was the hero of the Opposition that fought against the bill. He was the Achilles of the Anti-Reformers. His attacks on the Government had, of course, all the more piquancy that they came from a Liberal, and one who had held office in two Liberal administrations. The Tory

benches shouted and screamed with delight, as in speech after speech of admirable freshness and vigour Mr. Lowe poured his scathing sarcasms in upon the bill and its authors. Even their own leader and champion, Mr. Disraeli, became of comparatively small account with the Tories when they heard Mr. Lowe's invectives against their enemies. Much of Mr. Lowe's success was undoubtedly due to the manner in which he hit the tone and temper of the Conservatives and of the disaffected Whigs. Applause and admiration are contagious in the House of Commons. When a great number of voices join in cheers and in praise, other voices are caught by the attraction, and cheer and praise out of the sheer infection of sympathy. It is needless to say that the applause reacts upon the orator. The more he feels that the House admires him, the more likely he is to make himself worthy of the admiration. The occasion told on Mr. Lowe. His form seemed, metaphorically at least, to grow greater and grander on that scene, as the enthusiasm of his admirers waxed and heated. Certainly he never after that time made any great mark by his speeches, or won back any of the fame as an orator which was his during that short and to him splendid period. But the speeches themselves were masterly as mere literary productions. Not many men could have fewer physical qualifications for success in oratory than Mr. Lowe. He had an awkward and ungainly presence; his gestures were angular and ungraceful; his voice was harsh and rasping; his articulation was so imperfect that he became now and then almost unintelligible; his sight was so short that when he had to read a passage or extract of any kind, he could only puzzle over its contents in a painful and blundering way, even with the paper held up close to his eyes; and his memory was not good enough to allow him to quote anything without the help of documents. How, it may be asked in wonder, was such a speaker as this to contend in eloquence with the torrent-like fluency, the splendid diction, the silver-trumpet voice of Gladstone; or with the thrilling vibrations of Bright's noble eloquence, now penetrating in its pathos, and now irresistible in its humour? Even those who well remember these great debates may ask themselves in unsatisfied wonder the same question now. It is certain that Mr. Lowe has not the most distant claim to be ranked as an orator with Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright. Yet it is equally certain that he did for that season stand up against each of them, against them both; against them both at their very best; and that he held his own.

Mr. Disraeli was thrown completely into the shade. Mr. Disraeli was not, it is said, much put out by this. He listened quietly, perhaps even contemptuously, looking upon the whole episode as one destined to pass quickly away. He did not believe that Mr. Lowe was likely to be a peer

of Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright—or of himself—in debate. 'You know I never made much of Lowe,' he said in conversation with a political opponent some years after, and when Mr. Lowe's eloquence had already become only a memory. But for the time Mr. Lowe was the master spirit of the opposition to the Reform Bill. In sparkling sentences, full of classical allusion and of illustrations drawn from all manner of literatures, he denounced and satirized demagogues, democratic governments, and every influence that tended to bring about any political condition which allowed of an ominous comparison with something in Athenian history. Reduced to their logical and philosophical meaning, Mr. Lowe's speeches were really nothing but arguments for that immemorial object of desire, the government by the wise and good. They had nothing in particular to do with the small question in domestic legislation, as to whether seven pounds or ten pounds was to be the limit of a borough franchise. They would have been just as effective if used in favour of an existing seven pounds qualification, and against a proposed qualification of six pounds fifteen shillings. Seven pounds, it might have been insisted, was just the low water mark of the wise and good; any lower we shall have the rule of the unwise and the wicked. Nor did Mr. Lowe show how, if the fierce wave of democracy was rising in such terrible might, it could be dammed out by the retention of a ten pounds franchise. His alarms and his portents were in amazing contrast to his proposed measures of safety. He hoped to bind Leviathan with packthread. Alaric was at the gates; Mr. Lowe's last hope was in the power of the Court of Chancery to serve the invader with an injunction. The simple-minded deputies who during the *coup d'état* in Paris went forth to meet the soldiers of the usurper with their scarfs of office, in the belief that they could thus restrain them from violation of the constitutional law, were on a philosophical level with Mr. Lowe when he proclaimed to England that her ancient system must fall into cureless ruin and become the shame and scandal of all time, if she abandoned her last rampart, the ten pounds franchise. But Mr. Lowe was embodying in brilliant sarcasm and vivid paradox the fears, prejudices, and spites, the honest dislikes and solid objections of a large proportion of English society. Trades' unions, strikes, rumours of political disaffection in Ireland, the angry and extravagant words of artisan orators and agitators in London; a steady hatred of all American principles; a certain disappointment that the American Republic had not fulfilled most men's predictions and gone to pieces—these and various other feelings combined to make a great many Englishmen particularly hostile to any proposals for political reform at that moment. Mr. Lowe was not merely the mouthpiece of all these

sentiments, but he gave what seemed to be an overwhelming philosophical argument to prove their wisdom and justice. The Conservatives made a hero, and even an idol, of him. Shrewd old members of the party, who ought to have known better, were heard to declare that he was not only the greatest orator, but even the greatest statesman, of the day. In truth, Mr. Lowe was neither orator nor statesman. He had some of the gifts which are needed to make a man an orator, but hardly any of those which constitute a statesman. He was a literary man and a scholar, who had a happy knack of saying bitter things in an epigrammatic way; he really hated the Reform Bill, towards which Mr. Disraeli probably felt no emotion whatever, and he started into prominence as an anti-reformer just at the right moment to suit the Conservatives and embarrass and dismay the Liberal party. He was greatly detested for a time amongst the working classes, for whose benefit the measure was chiefly introduced. He not only spoke out with cynical frankness his own opinion of the merits and morals of the people 'who live in these small houses,' but he implied that all the other members of the House held the same opinion, if they would only venture to give it a tongue. He was once or twice mobbed in the streets; he was strongly disliked and dreaded for the hour by the Liberals; he was the most prominent figure on the stage during these weeks of excitement; and no doubt he was perfectly happy.

The debates on the bill brought out some speeches which have not been surpassed in the Parliamentary history of our time. Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone were at their very best. Mr. Bright likened the formation of the little band of malcontents to the doings of David in the cave of Adullam when he called about him 'every one that was in distress and every one that was discontented,' and became a captain over them. The allusion told upon the House with instant effect, for many had suspected and some had said that if Mr. Horsman and Mr. Lowe had been more carefully conciliated by the Prime Minister at the time of his Government's formation, there might have been no such acrimonious opposition to the bill. The little third party were at once christened the Adullamites, and the name still survives and is likely long to survive its old political history. Mr. Gladstone's speech, with which the great debate on the second reading concluded, was aflame with impassioned eloquence. One passage, in which he met the superfluous accusation, that he had come over a stranger to the Liberal camp, was filled with a certain pathetic dignity. The closing words of the speech, in which he prophesied a speedy success to the principles then on the verge of defeat, brought the debate fittingly up to its highest point of interest and excitement. 'You cannot,' he said in his closing words, 'fight against the future. Time is

on our side. The great social forces which move on in their might and majesty, and which the tumult of our debates does not for a moment impede or disturb—those great social forces are against you; they are marshalled on our side, and the banner which we now carry, though perhaps at this moment it may droop over our sinking heads, yet soon again will float in the eye of heaven, and it will be borne by the firm hands of the united people of the three kingdoms perhaps not to an easy, but to a certain and a not distant victory.'

This speech was concluded on the morning of April 28. The debate which it brought to a close had been carried on for eight nights. The House of Commons was wrought up to a pitch of the most intense excitement when the division came to be taken. The closing passages of Mr. Gladstone's speech had shown clearly enough that he did not expect much of a triumph for the Government. The House was crowded to excess. The numbers voting were large beyond almost any other previous instance. There were for the second reading of the bill 318: there were against it 313. The second reading was carried by a majority of only five. The wild cheers of the Conservatives and the Adullamites showed on which 'sword sat laurel victory.' Everyone knew then that the bill was doomed. It only remained for those who opposed it to put a few amendments on the paper as a prelude to the bill's going into committee, and the Opposition must succeed. The question now was, not whether the measure would be a failure, but only when the failure would have to be confessed.

The time for the confession soon came. The opponents of the reform scheme kept pouring in amendments on the motion to go into committee. These came chiefly from the Ministerial side of the House. As in 1860, so now in 1866, the Conservative leader of the House of Commons had the satisfaction of seeing his work done for him very effectively by those who were in general his political opponents. He was not compelled to run the risk or incur the responsibility of pledging himself or his party against all reform in order to get rid of this particular scheme. All that he wanted was being done for him by men who had virtually pledged themselves over and over again in favour of reform. The bill at last got into committee; and here the strife was renewed. Lord Stanley moved an amendment to postpone the clauses relating to the county franchise until the redistribution of seats should first have been dealt with. This amendment was rejected, but not by a great majority. Mr. Ward Hunt moved that the franchise in counties be fourteen pounds rateable value, instead of gross estimated rental. This too was defeated. Lord Dunkellin, usually a supporter of the Government, moved that the seven pounds franchise in boroughs be on a rating instead of a rental qualifica-

tion. The effect of this would be to make the franchise a little higher than the Government proposed to fix it. Houses are generally rated at a value somewhat below the amount of the rent paid on them, and therefore a rating franchise of seven pounds would probably in most places be about equivalent to a rental franchise of eight pounds. Therefore the opponents of reform would have interposed another barrier of twenty shillings in certain cases between England and the flood of democracy. Prudent and law-abiding men might accept with safety a franchise of eight pounds, or even say seven pounds ten shillings, in boroughs; but a franchise of seven pounds would mean the Red Republic, mob-rule, the invasion of democracy, the shameful victory, and all the other terrible things which Mr. Lowe had been foreshadowing in his prophetic fury. Lord Dunkellin carried his amendment; 315 voted for it, only 304 against. The announcement of the numbers was received with tumultuous demonstrations of joy. The Adullamites had saved the State. Lord Russell's last reform scheme was a failure; and the Liberal Ministry had come to an end.

Lord Russell and his colleagues tendered their resignation to the Queen, and after a little delay and some discussion, the resignation was accepted. It would hardly have been possible for Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone to do otherwise. Their Reform Bill was the one distinctive measure of the session. It was the measure which especially divided their policy from that of Lord Palmerston's closing years. To abandon it would be to abandon their chief reason for being in office at all. They could not carry it. They had got as far in the session as the last few days of June, and everything was against them. The commercial panic had intervened. The suspension of the great firm of Overend and Gurney had brought failure after failure with it. The famous 'Black Friday,' Friday, May 11, had made its most disastrous mark in the history of the City of London. The Bank Charter had to be suspended. The cattle plague, although checked by the stringent measures of the Government, was still raging, and the landlords and cattle-owners were still in a state of excitement and alarm, and had long been clamouring over the insufficiency of the compensation which other classes condemned as unreasonable alike in principle and in proportion. The day before the success of Lord Dunkellin's motion, the Emperor of Austria had issued a manifesto explaining the course of events which compelled him to draw the sword against Prussia. A day or two after, Italy entered into the quarrel by declaring war against Austria. The time seemed hopeless for pressing a small Reform Bill on in the face of an unwilling Parliament, and for throwing the country into the turmoil and expense of another general election. Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone accepted the situation, and resigned office.

The one mistake they had made was to bring in a Reform Bill of so insignificant and almost unmeaning a character. It is more than probable that the difficulties Lord Russell had with the Whig section of his Cabinet compelled him to compromise to a degree which his own inclinations and his own principles would not have approved, and to which Mr. Gladstone could only yield a reluctant assent. But if this be the explanation of what happened, it would have been better to put off the measure for a session or two, and allow public opinion out of doors to express itself so clearly as to convince the Whigs that the people in general were really in earnest about reform. No Reform Bill can be carried unless it is sustained by such an amount of enthusiasm among its supporters in and out of Parliament as to convince the timid, the selfish, and the doubting that the measure must be passed. In the nature of things the men actually in Parliament cannot be expected to enter with any great spontaneous enthusiasm into a project for sending them back to their constituencies to run the risk and bear the cost of a new election by untried voters. It will, therefore, always be easy for the men in possession to persuade their consciences that the public good is opposed to any change, if no strong demand be made for the particular change in question. Now the compromise which Lord Russell's Government offered in the shape of a Reform Bill was not calculated to stir up the enthusiasm of anyone. The ardour with which in the end it came to be advocated was merely the heat which in men's natures is always generated by a growing controversy and by fierce opposition. The strongest and most effective attack made by the Opposition, that led by Mr. Lowe, was not directed against that particular measure so much as against all measures of reform; against the fundamental principle of a popular suffrage, and indeed of a representative assembly. As soon as the doubtful men in the House discovered that there was no genuine enthusiasm existing on behalf of the bill, its fate became certain. When the more extreme Reformers came to think over the condition of things, and when their spirits were set free from the passion of recent controversy, very few of them could have felt any great regret for the defeat of the bill. Those who understood the real feelings of the yet unenfranchised part of the population, knew well that some Administration would have to introduce a strong measure of reform before long. They were content to wait. The interval of delay proved shorter than they could well have expected.

The defeat of the bill and the resignation of the Ministry brought the political career of Lord Russell to a close. He took advantage of the occasion soon after to make a sort of formal announcement that he handed over the task of leading the Liberal party to Mr. Gladstone. He appeared

indeed in public life on several occasions after his resignation of office. He took part sometimes in the debates of the House of Lords; he even once or twice introduced measures there, and endeavoured to get them passed. During the long controversies on the Washington Treaty and the claims of the United States, he took a somewhat prominent part in the discussions of the Peers, and was always listened to with attention and respect. About a year after the fall of his Administration he was one of the company at a breakfast given to Mr. Garrison, the American Anti-Slavery leader, in St. James's Hall, and he won much applause there by the frankness and good spirit of his tribute to the memory of President Lincoln, and by his manly acknowledgment of more than one mistake in his former judgments of Lincoln's policy and character. Lord Russell spoke on this occasion with a vigour quite equal to that which he might have displayed some twenty years before; and indeed many of those present felt surprised at his resolve to abandon active public life while he still seemed so well capable of bearing a part in it. Lord Russell's career, however, was practically at an end. It had been a long and an interesting career. It was begun amid splendid chances. Lord John Russell was born in the very purple of politics; he was cradled and nursed among statesmen and orators; the fervid breath of young liberty fanned his boyhood; his tutors, friends, companions, were the master-spirits who rule the fortunes of nations; he had the ministerial benches for a training ground, and had a seat in the Administration at his disposal when another young man might have been glad of a seat in an opera-box. He must have been brought into more or less intimate association with all the men and women worth knowing in Europe since the early part of the century. He was a pupil of Dugald Stewart at Edinburgh, and he sat as a youth at the feet of Fox. He had accompanied Wellington in some of his Peninsular campaigns; he measured swords with Canning and Peel successively through years of Parliamentary warfare. He knew Metternich and Talleyrand. He had met the widow of Charles Stuart, the young Chevalier, in Florence; and had conversed with Napoleon in Elba. He knew Cavour and Bismarck. He was now an ally of Daniel O'Connell, and now of Cobden and Bright. He was the close friend of Thomas Moore; he knew Byron, and was one of the few allowed to read the personal memoirs which were unfortunately destroyed by Byron's friends. Lord John Russell had tastes for literature, for art, for philosophy, for history, for politics; and his æstheticism had the advantage that it made him seek the society and appreciate the worth of men of genius and letters. Thus he never remained a mere politician like Pitt or Palmerston. His public career suggests almost as strange a series of contradictions, or paradoxes,

as Macaulay finds in that of Pitt. He who began with a reputation for a heat of temperament worthy of Achilles was for more than half his career regarded as a frigid and bloodless politician. In Ireland he was long known rather as the author of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill than as the early friend of Catholic Emancipation; in England as the parent of petty and abortive Reform Bills, rather than as the promoter of the one great Reform Bill. Abroad and at home he came to be thought of as the minister who disappointed Denmark and abandoned Poland, rather than as the earnest friend and faithful champion of oppressed nationalities. No statesman could be a more sincere and thorough opponent of slavery in all its forms and works; and yet in the mind of the American people, Lord Russell's name was for a long time associated with the idea of a scarcely-concealed support of the slave-holders' rebellion. Much of this curious contrast, this seeming inconsistency, is due to the fact that for the greater part of his public life Lord Russell's career was a mere course of see-saw between office and opposition. The sort of superstition that long prevailed in our political affairs limited the higher offices of statesmanship to two or three conventionally acceptable men on either side. If not Sir Robert Peel, then it must be Lord John Russell; if it was not Lord Derby, it must be Lord Palmerston. Therefore, if the business of government was to go on at all, a statesman must take office now and then with men whom he could not mould wholly to his purpose, and must act in seeming sympathy with principles and measures which he would himself have little cared to originate. Lord Palmerston complained humourously in one of his later letters, that a Prime Minister could no longer have it all his own way in his Cabinet. Men were coming up who had wills and consciences, ideas and abilities of their own, and who would not consent to be the mere clerks of the Prime Minister. Great popular parties too, he might have added, were growing up in the country with powerful leaders, men whose opinions must be taken into account on every subject even though they never were to be in office. It is easy enough to understand how under such conditions the minister who had seemed a daring Reformer to one generation might seem but a chilly compromiser to another. It is easy too to understand how the career, which at its opening was illumined by the splendid victory of the Reform Bill of 1832, should have been clouded at its close by the rather ignominious failure of the Reform Bill of 1866. The personal life of Lord Russell was consistent all through. He began as a Reformer; he ended as a Reformer. If the 'might have beens' were not always a vanity, it would be reasonable as well as natural to regret that it was not given to Lord Russell to complete the work of 1832 by a genuine and successful measure of Reform in 1866.

CHAPTER LI.

THE REFORM AGITATION.

The Reform banner, then, had 'drooped over the sinking heads' of Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone, and the Liberal Administration was at an end. The Queen, of course, sent for Lord Derby. There was no one else to send for. Somebody must carry on the Queen's government; and therefore Lord Derby had no alternative but to set to work and try to form an Administration. He did not appear to have done so with much good-will. He had no personal desire to enter office once again; he had no inclination for official responsibilities. He was not very fond of work, even when younger and stronger, and the habitual indolence of his character had naturally grown with years, and just now with infirmities. There was, therefore, something of a genuine patriotic self-sacrifice in the consent which he gave to relieve the Sovereign and the country from difficulties by accepting at such a time the office of Prime Minister and undertaking to form a Government. It was generally understood, however, that he would only consent to be the Prime Minister of an interval, and that whenever with convenience to the interests of the State some other hand could be entrusted with power, he would expect to be released from the trouble of official life. The prospect for a Conservative Ministry was not inviting. Despite the manner in which Lord Russell's Reform Bill had been hustled out of existence, no sagacious Tory seriously believed that the new Government could do as Lord Palmerston had done; that is, could treat the whole Reform question as if it were shelved by the recent action of the House of Commons, and take no further trouble about it. Lord Derby, too, when he came to form a Government, found himself met by one unexpected difficulty. He had hoped to be able to weld together a sort of coalition Ministry, which should to a certain extent represent both sides of the House. It seemed to him only reasonable to assume that the men who had co-operated with the Conservatives so earnestly in resisting the Reform measures of the late Government would consent to co-operate with the Conservative Ministry which their action had forced into existence. Accordingly, he had at once invited the leading members of the Adullamite party to accept places in his Administration. He was met by disappointment. The Adullamite chiefs agreed to decline all such co-operation. A leading article appeared one morning in a journal which was understood to have Mr. Lowe for one of its contributors, announcing,

in a solemn sentence made more solemn by being printed in capital letters, that those who had thrown out the Liberal Ministry on principle were bound to prove that they had not been animated by any ambition or self-seeking of their own. Indeed, the voice of public opinion freely acquitted some of them of any such desire from the beginning. Mr. Lowe, for example, was always thought to be somewhat uncertain and crotchety in his views. There were not wanting persons who said that he had no set and serious political opinions at all; that he was more easily charmed by antithesis than by principle; and that he would have been at any time ready to sacrifice his party to his paradox. But no one doubted his personal sincerity; and no one was surprised that he should have declined to accept any advantage from the reaction of which he had been the guiding spirit. About the rest of the Adullamites, truth to say, very few persons thought at all. No one doubted their sincerity, for indeed no one asked himself any question on the subject. Some of them were men of great territorial influence; some were men of long standing in Parliament. But they were absolutely unnoticed now that the crisis was over. The reaction was ascribed to one man alone. There was some curiosity felt as to the course that one man would pursue; but when it was known that Mr. Lowe would not take office under Lord Derby, nobody cared what became of the other denizens of the Cave. They might take office or let it alone; the public at large were absolutely indifferent on the subject.

The session had advanced far towards its usual time of closing when Lord Derby completed the arrangements for his Administration. Mr. Disraeli, of course, became Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons. Lord Stanley was Foreign Secretary. Lord Cranborne, formerly Lord Robert Cecil, was entrusted with the care of India; Lord Carnarvon undertook the Colonies; General Peel became War Minister; Sir Stafford Northcote was President of the Board of Trade; and Mr. Walpole took on himself the management of the Home Office, little knowing what a troublous business he had brought upon his shoulders. Sir John Pakington boldly assumed the control of the Admiralty, an appropriation of office to which only the epigram of a Beaumarchais could supply adequate illustration. On July 9 Lord Derby was able to announce to the Peers that he had put together his house of cards.

The new Ministry had hardly taken their places when a perfect storm of agitation broke out all over the country. The Conservatives and the Adullamites had both asserted that the working people in general were indifferent about the franchise; and a number of organisations now sprang into existence, having for their object to prove to the world that no such apathy prevailed. Reform Leagues and Reform Unions started up as if

out of the ground. Public meetings of vast dimensions began to be held day after day for the purpose of testifying to the strength of the desire for Reform. The most noteworthy of these was the famous Hyde Park meeting. The Reformers of the metropolis determined to hold a monster meeting in the Park. The authorities took the very unwise course of determining to prohibit it, and a proclamation or official notice was issued to that effect. The Reformers were acting under the advice of Mr. Edmond Beales, President of the Reform League, a barrister of some standing, and a man of character and considerable ability. Mr. Beales was of opinion that the authorities had no legal power to prevent the meeting; and of course it need hardly be said that a Commissioner of Police, or even a Home Secretary, is not qualified to make anything legal or illegal by simply proclaiming it so. The London Reformers, therefore, determined to try their right with the authorities. On July 23, a number of processions, marching with bands and banners, set out from different parts of London and made for Hyde Park. The authorities had posted notices announcing that the gates of the Park would be closed at five o'clock that evening. When the first of the processions arrived at the Park the gates were closed, and a line of policemen was drawn outside. The President of the Reform League, Mr. Beales, and some other prominent Reformers, came up in a carriage, alighted, and endeavoured to enter the Park. They were refused admittance. They asked for the authority by which they were refused; and they were told that it was the authority of the Commissioner of Police. They then quietly re-entered the carriage. It was their intention first to assert their right, and then, being refused, to try it in the regular and legal way. It was no part of their intention to make any disturbance. They seem to have taken every step which they thought necessary to guard against any breach of the peace. It was clearly their interest, as it was no doubt their desire, to have the law on their side. They went to Trafalgar Square, followed by a large crowd, and there a meeting was extemporised, at which resolutions were passed demanding the extension of the suffrage, and thanking Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and other men who had striven to obtain it. The speaking was short; it was not physically possible to speak with any effect to so large an assemblage. Then that part of the demonstration came quietly to an end.

Meantime, however, a different scene had been going on at Hyde Park. A large and motley crowd had hung about the gates and railings. The crowd was composed partly of genuine Reformers, partly of mere sightseers and curiosity-mongers, partly of mischievous boys, and to no inconsiderable extent of ordinary London roughs. Not a few of all sections,

perhaps, were a little disappointed that things had gone so quietly off. Many of the younger lookers-on felt aggrieved exactly as the boys did in the 'Bride of Lammermoor,' when they found that the supposed fire was not to end in any explosion after all, and that the castle had 'gane out like an auld wife's spunk.' The mere mass of people pressed and pressing round the railings would almost in any case have somewhat seriously threatened their security and tried their strength. Emerson has said that every revolution, however great, is, first of all, a thought in the mind of a single man. One disappointed Reformer lingering in Park Lane, with his breast against the rails, as the poetic heroine had hers, metaphorically, against the thorn, became impressed with the idea that the barrier was somewhat frail and shaky. How would it be, he vaguely thought for a moment, if he were to give an impulse and drive the railing in? What, he wondered to himself, would come of that? The temptation was great. He shook the rails; the rails began to give way. Not that alone, but the sudden movement was felt along the line, and into a hundred minds came at once the grand revolutionary idea which an instant before had been a thought in the mind of one hitherto unimportant man. A simultaneous impulsive rush, and some yards of railing were down, and men in scores were tumbling, and floundering, and rushing over them. The example was followed along Park Lane, and in a moment half a mile of iron railing was lying on the grass, and a tumultuous and delighted mob were swarming over the Park. The news ran wildly through the town. Some thought it a revolt; others were of opinion that it was a revolution. The first day of liberty was proclaimed here—the breaking loose of anarchy was shrieked at there. The mob capered and jumped over the sward for half the night through. Flower-beds and shrubs suffered a good deal, not so much from wanton destruction as from the pure boisterousness which came of an unexpected opportunity for horse-play. There were a good many little encounters with the police; stones were thrown on the one side and truncheons used on the other pretty freely; a detachment of foot guards was kept near the spot in readiness, but their services were not required. Indeed, the mob good-humouredly cheered the soldiers whenever they caught sight of them. A few heads were broken on both sides, and a few prisoners were made by the police; but there was no revolution, no revolt, no serious riot even, and no intention in the mind of any responsible person that there should be a riot. Mr. Disraeli that night declared in the House of Commons—half probably in jest, half certainly in earnest—that he was not quite sure whether he had still a house to go to. He found his house yet standing, and firmly roofed, when he returned home that night. London slept feverishly, and awoke next day to find

things going on very much as before. Crowds hastened, half in amusement half in fear, to look upon the scene of the previous evening's turmoil. There were the railings down sure enough; and in the park was still a large idle crowd, partly of harmless sight-seers, partly of roughs, with a considerable body of police keeping order. But there was no popular rising; and London began once more to eat its meals in peace. The sudden tumult was harmlessly over, and the one personage whose impulse first shook the railings of the Park may even now console himself in his obscurity by the thought that his push carried Reform.

Nothing can well be more certain than the fact that the Hyde Park riot, as it was called, convinced her Majesty's Ministers of the necessity of an immediate adoption of the reform principle. The Government took the Hyde Park riot with portentous gravity. Mr. Beales and some of his colleagues waited upon the Home Secretary next day, for the purpose of advising him to withdraw the military and police from the park, and leave it in the custody of the Reformers. Mr. Beales gravely lectured the Government for what they had done; and declared, as was undoubtedly the fact, that the foolish conduct of the Administration had been the original cause of all the disturbance. The Home Secretary, Mr. Walpole, a gentle and kindly man, had lost his head in the excitement of the hour. He mentally saw himself charged with the responsibility of civil strife and bloodshed. He was melted out of all self-command by the kindly bearing of Mr. Beales and the Reformers; and when they assured him that they were only anxious to help him to keep order, he fairly broke down and wept. He expressed himself with meek gratitude for their promised co-operation, and agreed to almost anything they could suggest. It was understood that the right of meeting in Hyde Park was left to be tested in some more satisfactory way at a future day, and the leaders of the Reform League took their departure undoubted masters of the situation.

All through the autumn and winter meetings were held in the great towns and cities to promote the cause of reform. They were for the most part mere demonstrations of numbers; and everyone of any sagacity knew perfectly well that it was by display of numbers the greatest effect would be produced upon the Ministry. Therefore the meetings were usually preceded by processions, and the attention of the public was turned far more to the processions than to the meetings. Hardly anyone took the trouble to discuss what was said at the meetings; but a constant public controversy was going on about the numerical strength of the processions. A hundred witnesses on both sides of the dispute rushed to the newspapers to bear testimony to the length of time which a particular procession had occupied in passing a given point. Rival calculations were

elaborately made to get at the number of persons marching which such a length of time implied. The most extraordinary differences of calculation were exhibited. It was a remarkable fact that the opponents of reform saw invariably a much smaller gathering than its supporters beheld. The calculations of the one set of observers brought out only hundreds, where those of the other resulted in thousands. A procession which one critic proved by the most elaborate and careful statistics to have contained a quarter of a million of men, a rival calculator was prepared to show could not by any possibility have contained more than ten or twelve thousand. Cooler observers than the professed partisans of one side or the other, thought that the most significant feature of these demonstrations was the part taken by the organised trades' associations of working men. Some of the processions were made up exclusively of the members of these organised Trades' Unions. They acted in strict deference to the resolutions and the discipline of their associations. They were great in numbers, and most imposing in their silent united strength. They had grown into all that discipline and that power unpatronised by any manner of authority; unrecognised by the law, unless indeed where the law occasionally went out of its way to try to prevent or to thwart the aims of their organisation. They had now grown to such strength that law and authority must see to make terms with them. The most extravagant rumours as to their secret doings and purposes alarmed the timid; and there can be no doubt that if a popular or social revolution were needed or were impending, the action taken by the working men's associations would have been of incalculable moment to the cause it espoused. As rank after rank of these men marched in quiet confidence through the principal streets of London, the thought must have occurred to many minds that here was an entirely new element in the calculations alike of statesmen and of demagogues, well capable of being made a new source of strength to a State under honest leadership and any really sound system of legislation, but qualified also to become a source of serious public danger, if misled by the demagogue or unfairly dealt with by the reactionary legislator. Some of these associations had supported great industrial strikes in which the judgment and the sympathies of all the classes that usually lead was against them. The capitalist and all who share his immediate interests; the employers, the rich of every kind, the aristocratic, the self-appointed public instructors, had all been against them; and they had nevertheless gone deliberately and stubbornly their own way. Sometimes they, or the cause they represented, had prevailed; often they and it had been defeated; but they had never acknowledged a defeat in principle, and they had kept on their own course undismayed, and, as many would have put it, unconvinced and

unreconciled. At this very time some of the doings of Trades' Unions, or of those who took on themselves to represent the purposes of such organisations, were creating dismay in many parts of England, and were a subject of excited discussion everywhere over the country. It could not but be a matter of the gravest moment when the 'organisation of labour,' as it would once have been grandiloquently called, thus turned out of its own direct path and identified itself, its cause, its resources, and its discipline with any great political movement.

Thus in England the year passed away. Men were organising reform demonstrations on the one side and showing the futility of them on the other. The calculations as to the lengths of processions and the time occupied in passing particular street-corners or lamp-posts went on unceasing. Stout Tories vowed that the Government never would yield to popular clamour. Not a few timid Reformers hoped in their secret hearts that Lord Derby would really stand fast. Many Liberals who could admit of no hope from the Tories, were already prepared with the conviction that the Government would risk all on the resolution to deny extended suffrage to the working classes. Not a few on both sides had a strong impression that Mr. Disraeli would do something to keep his friends in power, although they did not perhaps quite suspect that he was already engaged in the work of educating his party.

While England was thus occupied, stirring events were taking place elsewhere. In the interval between the resignation of Lord Russell and the completion of Lord Derby's Ministry, the battle of Sadowa had been fought. The leadership of Germany had been decisively won by Prussia. The 'humiliation of Olmutz' had been avenged. Venetia had been added to Italy, Austria had been excluded from any share in German affairs, and Prussia and France had been placed in that position which M. Prévost-Paradol likened to that of two express trains starting along the same line from opposite directions. The complete overthrow of Austria came with the shock of a bewildering surprise upon the great mass of the English public. Faith in the military strength of Austria had survived even the evidence of Solferino. English public instructors were for the most part as completely agreed about the utter incapacity of the Prussians for the business of war as if nobody had ever heard of Frederick the Great. Not many days before Sadowa, a leading London newspaper had a description, half pitiful, half contemptuous, of the unfortunate shopboys and young mechanics of whom the Prussian Army was understood to be composed, being hurried and driven along to the front to make food for powder for the well-trained legions of Austria under the command of the irresistible Benedek.

Just before the adjournment of Parliament for the recess, a great work of peace was accomplished; perhaps the only work of peace then possible which could be mentioned after the warlike business of Sadowa without producing the effect of an anti-climax. This was the completion of the Atlantic cable. On the evening of July 27, 1866, the cable was laid between Europe and America. Next day Lord Stanley, as Foreign Minister, was informed that perfect communication existed between England and the United States by means of the thread of wire that lay beneath the Atlantic. Words of friendly congratulation and greeting were interchanged between the Queen and the President of the United States. Ten years all but a month or two had gone by since Mr. Cyrus W. Field, the American promoter of the Atlantic telegraph project, had first tried to inspire cool and calculating men in London, Liverpool, and Manchester with some faith in his project. He was not a scientific man; he was not the inventor of the principle of inter-oceanic telegraphy; he was not even the first man to propose that a company should be formed for the purpose of laying a cable beneath the Atlantic. So long before as 1845 an attempt had been made by the Messrs. Brett to induce the English Government to assist them in a scheme for laying an electric wire to connect Europe with America. A plan for the purpose was actually registered; but the Government took no interest in the project, probably regarding it as on a par with the frequent applications which are made for the countenance and help of the Treasury in the promotion of flying machines and of projectiles to destroy an enemy's fleet at a thousand miles' distance. But the achievement of the Atlantic cable was none the less as distinctly the work of Mr. Cyrus Field as the discovery of America was that of Columbus. It was not he who first thought of doing the thing; but it was he who first made up his mind that it could be done, and showed the world how to do it, and did it in the end. The history of human invention has not a more inspiriting example of patience living down discouragement, and perseverance triumphing over defeat. The first attempt to lay the cable was made in 1857; but the vessels engaged in the expedition had only got about three hundred miles from the west coast of Ireland when the cable broke, and the effort had to be given up for that year. Next year the enterprise was renewed upon a different principle. Two ships of war, the 'Agamemnon,' English, and the 'Niagara,' American, sailed out together for the Mid-Atlantic, where they were to part company, having previously joined their cables, and were each to make for her own shore, each laying the line of wire as she went. Stormy weather arose suddenly and prevented the vessels from doing anything. The cable was broken several times in the effort to lay it, and at last the expedition returned. Another effort,

however, was made that summer. The cable was actually laid. It did for a few days unite Europe and America. Messages of congratulation passed along between the Queen and the President of the United States. The Queen congratulated the President upon 'the successful completion of the great international work,' and was convinced that 'the President will unite with her in fervently hoping that the electric cable which now connects Great Britain with the United States will prove an additional link between the nations whose friendship is founded in their common interest and reciprocal esteem.' The rejoicings in America were exuberant. Suddenly, however, the signals became faint; the messages grew inarticulate, and before long the power of communication ceased altogether. The cable became a mere cable again; the wire that spoke with such a miraculous eloquence had become silent. The construction of the cable had proved to be defective, and a new principle had to be devised by science. Yet something definite had been accomplished. It had been shown that a cable could be stretched and maintained under the ocean more than two miles deep and two thousand miles across. Another attempt was made in 1865, but it proved again a failure, and the shivered cable had to be left for the time in the bed of the Atlantic. At last, in 1866 the feat was accomplished, and the Atlantic telegraph was added to the realities of life. It has now become a distinct part of our civilised system. We have ceased to wonder at it. We accept it and its consequent facts with as much composure as we take the existence of the inland telegraph or the penny post. It seems hard now to understand how people got on when it took a fortnight to receive news from the United States. Since the success of the Atlantic cable many telegraphic wires have been laid in the beds of oceans. All England chafed as at an insufferable piece of negligence on the part of somebody the other day, when it was found, in a moment of national emergency, that there was a lack of direct telegraphic communication between this country and the Cape of Good Hope, and that we could not ask a question of South Africa and have an answer within a few minutes. Perhaps it may encourage future projectors and inventors to know that, in the case of the Atlantic cable as in that of the Suez Canal, some of the highest scientific authority was given to proclaim the actual hopelessness, the wild impracticability, the sheer physical impossibility of such an enterprise having any success. 'Before the ships left this country with the cable,' wrote Robert Stephenson in 1857, 'I very publicly predicted as soon as they got into deep water a signal failure. It was in fact inevitable.' Nine years after, the inevitable had been avoided; the failure turned to success.

CHAPTER LII.

THE LEAP IN THE DARK.

The autumn and winter of agitation passed away, and the time was at hand when the new Ministry must meet a new session of Parliament. The country looked with keen interest, and also with a certain amused curiosity, to see what the Government would do with Reform in the session of 1867. When Lord Derby took office he had not in any way committed himself and his colleagues against a Reform Bill. On the contrary, he had announced that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to see a very considerable proportion of the now excluded class admitted to the franchise; but he had qualified this announcement by the expression of a doubt whether any measure of Reform on which the two great political parties could agree would be likely to satisfy the extreme Reformers, or to put a stop to agitation. More than once Lord Derby had intimated plainly enough that he was willing to make one other effort at a settlement of the question, but if that effort should not succeed he would have nothing more to do with the matter. He was well known to have taken office reluctantly, and he gave it to be clearly understood that he did not by any means propose to devote the remainder of his life to the business of rolling Reform Bills a little way up the Parliamentary hill merely in order to see them rolled down again. Most persons assumed, however, that Mr. Disraeli would look at the whole question from a different point of view; that he had personal and natural ambition still to gratify; and that he was not likely to allow the position of his party to be greatly damaged by any lack of flexibility on his part. The Conservatives were in office, but only in office; they were not in power. The defection among the Liberals, and not their own strength or success, had set the Tories on the Ministerial benches. They could not possibly keep their places there without at least trying to amuse the country on the subject of Reform. The great majority of Liberals felt sure that some effort would be made by the Government to carry a bill, but their general impression was that it would be a measure cleverly put together with the hope of inducing the country to accept shadow for substance; and that nothing would come of it except an interval during which the demand of the unenfranchised classes would become more and more earnest and impassioned. It had not entered into the mind of anyone to conceive that Lord Derby's Government were likely to entertain the country by the odd succession of surprises which diversified the session, and to assist at the

gradual formation, by contribution from all sides, sets, and individuals, of a Reform measure far more broadly liberal and democratic than anything which Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone would have ventured or cared to introduce.

Parliament opened on February 5. The Speech from the Throne alluded, as everyone had expected that it would, to the subject of Reform. 'Your attention,' so ran the words of the speech, 'will again be called to the state of the representation of the people in Parliament;' and then the hope was expressed that 'Your deliberations, conducted in a spirit of moderation and mutual forbearance, may lead to the adoption of measures which, without unduly disturbing the balance of political power, shall freely extend the elective franchise.' The hand of Mr. Disraeli, people said, was to be seen clearly enough in these vague and ambiguous phrases. How, it was asked, can the franchise be freely extended, in the Reformer's sense, without disturbing the balance of political power unduly, in Mr. Disraeli's sense? Again and again, in session after session, he had been heard arguing that a great enlargement of the suffrage to the working classes must disturb the balance of political power; that it would in itself be a disturbance of the balance of political power; that it would give an immense preponderance to a class 'homogeneous'—such was Mr. Disraeli's own favourite word—in their interests and fashions. How then could he now offer to introduce any such change? And what other change did anyone want? What other change would satisfy anybody who wanted a change at all? More and more the conviction spread that Mr. Disraeli would only try to palm off some worthless measure on the House of Commons, and by the help of the insincere Reformers and the Adullamites, endeavour to induce the majority to accept it. People had little idea, however, of the flexibility the Government were soon to display. The history of Parliament in our modern days, or indeed in any days that we know much of, has nothing like the proceedings of that extraordinary session.

On February 11, Mr. Disraeli announced that the Government had made up their minds to proceed 'by way of resolution.' The great difficulty, he explained, in the way of passing a Reform Bill was that the two great political parties could not be got to agree beforehand on any principles by which to construct a measure. 'Let us then, before we go to work at the construction of a Reform Bill this time, agree amongst ourselves as to what sort of measure we want. The rest will be easy.' He, therefore, announced his intention to put into the Parliamentary caldron a handful of resolutions, out of which, when they had been allowed to simmer, would miraculously arise the majestic shape of a good Reform Bill made

perfect. Mr. Disraeli relied greatly on the example afforded by the construction of the new system of government for India as an encouragement to the course he now recommended. We have seen that after the suppression of the Indian Mutiny there was much difficulty felt about the creation of a new scheme for the government of India. The House of Commons then agreed to proceed carefully by way of resolution in the first instance, and thus got the principles on which they proposed to govern India completely settled before they set about embodying them in practical legislation. Only the curious ingenuity of Mr. Disraeli's mind could have discovered any resemblance between the two cases. When Parliament had to take on itself the government of India, the first difficulty was to settle the principles on which India could best be governed. It was not a question of party; one party was as much in a difficulty as another; neither was pledged to any particular course. It was a time for consultation, for the hearing of all opinions, for the consideration and comparison of all testimonies and suggestions. It was, in short, a time of novelty and of uncertainty, when the only reasonable course was for the two great parties to take informal counsel before either committed itself to any defined scheme or even principle of action. What resemblance did such a condition of things bear to that in which Parliament found itself now that it had to consider the subject of an extended franchise? The difficulty arose not from a lack of knowledge, but from the existence of different opinions and different principles. All that could be got at in the way of information had been times out of mind showered out over the whole subject of Reform. It had been discussed down to the very dregs in Parliament after Parliament. Neither of the two great political parties wanted more information of any kind, but both having long been in possession of all the information accessible to the quest of man, they were unable to agree as to the course which ought to be taken, and differed absolutely in their political principles. One party was pledged by its traditions and its supposed interests to oppose a popular suffrage; the other was pledged in exactly the same way to support it. What possible chance was there of a common ground being found by the discussion of a series of resolutions? If either party was willing to compromise, it had only to say so; two sentences would sufficiently explain what the compromise was to be. Each saw as distinctly as the other what it wanted to have; if either was willing to renounce any part of its supposed claim, it would be enough to say so. A suitor asks for a girl in marriage; her father refuses to consent. Would the two be brought any nearer to an agreement if they were to hold a solemn conference, and draw up a series of resolutions setting forth what in the opinion of each were the

true conditions of a happy union? Just as well might Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Bright have set about drawing up a series of resolutions to embody what each thought of the conditions of a Reform Bill.

The resolutions which Mr. Disraeli proposed to submit to the House were for the most part sufficiently absurd. Some of them were platitudes which it could not be worth anyone's while to take the trouble of affirming by formal resolution. What advantage could there be in declaring by resolution that 'it is contrary to the constitution of this realm to give to any one class or interest a predominating power over the rest of the community?' Who ever said, or was likely to say, that to give one class a preponderating power over the rest of the community was in accordance with the principles of the Constitution? Even if Jack Cade were prepared to demand such a power for his own class, he would not take the trouble of trying to convince people that it could be done in conformity with the existing principles of the Constitution. To what purpose was the House of Commons invited to declare that in any redistribution of seats the main consideration should be 'the expediency of supplying representation to places not at present represented, and which may be considered entitled to that privilege'? What other main consideration could any sane person have in preparing a scheme for the redistribution of seats? It would be as wise to recommend the judges of our civil courts to declare by a formal resolution, that their main consideration in hearing causes should be to allow litigants an opportunity of setting forth their claims and obtaining justice. But then, on the other hand, it has to be observed that most of the resolutions which were not simple truisms embodied propositions such as no Prime Minister could possibly have expected the House to agree on without violent struggles, determined resistance, and eager divisions. The principle of rating as a basis of qualification, the device of plurality of votes, the plan of voting by means of polling-papers—these were some of the propositions which Mr. Disraeli calmly suggested that the House should affirm along with the declarations that one party ought not to have all the power, and that the object of redistribution was to redistribute properly. The Liberal party, especially that section of it which acknowledged the authority of Mr. Bright, would have had to be beaten to its knees before it would consent to accept some of these devices.

Mr. Disraeli seems to have learned almost at once, from the demeanour of the House, that it would be hopeless to press his resolutions. On February 25 he quietly substituted for them a sort of Reform Bill, which he announced that the Government intended to introduce. The occupation franchise in boroughs was to be reduced to six pounds, and in counties to twenty pounds, in each case the qualification to be based on

rating; that is, the right of a man to vote was to be made dependent on the arrangements by his local vestry or other rate-imposing body. There were to be all manner of 'fancy franchises.' A man who had fifty pounds in the funds, or had thirty pounds in a savings bank and had kept that amount untouched for a year, was to be rewarded with the vote. If he had given a ten-pound note to his daughter to buy her wedding clothes; or had laid out five pounds in the burial of a poor and aged parent; or lent a sovereign to a friend in distress, he would of course be disfranchised by his improvidence. If he paid twenty shillings in direct taxes during the year he was to have a vote. If he bore the degree of a University, or was a minister of religion, a lawyer, a doctor, or a certified schoolmaster, he was to have the franchise: a whimsical sort of educational franchise which would have refused a vote to Mr. Bright, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Mill, or to Mr. Disraeli himself. There seemed something unintelligible, or at least mysterious, about the manner in which this bill was introduced. It was to all appearance not based upon the resolutions; certainly it made no reference to some of the more important of their provisions. We need not go into the plan of redistribution which was tacked to the bill; for the bill itself never had any substantial existence. The House of Commons received with contemptuous indifference Mr. Disraeli's explanation of its contents, and the very next day Mr. Disraeli announced that the Government had determined to withdraw it, to give up at the same time the whole plan of proceeding by resolution, and to introduce a real and substantial Reform Bill in a few days.

Parliament and the public were amazed at these sudden changes. The whole thing seemed turning into burlesque. The session had seen only a few days, and here already was a third variation in the shape of the Government's reform project. To increase the confusion and scandal it was announced three or four days after that three leading members of the Cabinet—General Peel, Lord Carnarvon, and Lord Cranborne—had resigned. The whole story at last came out. The revelation was due to the 'magnificent indiscretion' of Sir John Pakington, whose lucky incapacity to keep a secret has curiously enriched one chapter of the political history of his time. In consequence of the necessary reconstruction of the Cabinet, Sir John Pakington was transferred from the Admiralty to the War Office, and had to go down to his constituents of Droitwich for re-election. In the fulness of his heart he told a story which set all England laughing. The Government, it would appear, started with two distinct Reform Bills, one more comprehensive and liberal, as they considered, than the other. The latter was kept ready only as a last resource, in case the first should meet with a chilling reception from the

Conservatism of the House of Commons. In that emergency they proposed to be ready to produce their less comprehensive scheme. A shopman sometimes offers a customer some article which he assures him is the only thing of the kind fit to have; but if the customer resolutely declares that its price is more than he will pay, the shopman suddenly remembers that he has something of the same sort on hand which although cheaper will, he has no doubt, be found to serve the purpose quite as well. So the chiefs of the Conservative Cabinet had their two Reform Bills in stock. If the House should accept the extensive measure, well and good; but in the event of their drawing back from it, there was the other article ready to hand, cheaper to be sure, and not quite so fine to look at, but a very excellent thing in itself, and warranted to serve every purpose. The more liberal measure was to have been strictly based on the resolutions. The Cabinet met on Saturday, February 23, and then, as Sir John Pakington said, he and others were under the impression that they had come to a perfect understanding; that they were unanimous; and that the comprehensive measure was to be introduced on Monday, the 25th. On that Monday, however, the Cabinet were hastily summoned together. Sir John rushed to the spot, and a piece of alarming news awaited him. Some leading members of the Cabinet had refused point blank to have anything to do with the comprehensive bill. Here was a coil! It was two o'clock. Lord Derby had to address a meeting of the Conservative party at half-past two. Mr. Disraeli had to introduce the bill, some bill, in the House of Commons at half-past four. Something must be done. Some bill must be introduced. All eyes, we may suppose, glanced at the clock. Sir John Pakington averred that there were only ten minutes left for decision. It is plain that no man, whatever his gift of statesmanship or skill of penmanship, can draw up a complete Reform Bill in ten minutes. Now came into full light the wisdom and providence of those who had hit upon the plan of keeping a second-class bill, if we may use such an expression, ready for emergencies. Out came the second-class bill, and it was promptly resolved that Mr. Disraeli should go down to the House of Commons and gravely introduce that, as if it were the measure which the Government had all along had it in their minds to bring forward. Sir John defended that resolution with simple and practical earnestness. It was not a wise resolve, he admitted; but who can be certain of acting wisely with only ten minutes for deliberation? If they had had even an hour to think the matter over, he had no doubt, he said, that they would not have made any mistake. But what skills talking?—they had not an hour, and there was an end of the matter. They had to do something; and so Mr. Disraeli brought in his second-class measure; the measure

which Sir John Pakington's piquant explanation sent down into political history with the name of 'the Ten Minutes Bill.'

The trouble arose, it seems, in this way. General Peel at first felt some scruples about the original measure, the comprehensive bill. Lord Cranborne pressed him to give the measure further consideration, and General Peel consented. So the Cabinet broke up on the evening of Saturday, February 23, in seeming harmony. Next day, however, being Sunday, Lord Cranborne, having probably nothing else to do, bethought him that it would be well to look a little into the details of the bill. He worked out the figures, as he afterwards explained, and he found that according to his calculation they would almost amount to household suffrage in some of the boroughs. That would never do, he thought; and so he tendered his resignation. This would almost, as a matter of course, involve other resignations too. Therefore there came the hasty meeting of the Cabinet on Monday, the 25th, which Sir John Pakington described with such unconscious humour. Lord Cranborne, and those who thought with him, were induced to remain, on condition that the comprehensive bill should be quietly put aside, and the ten minutes bill as quietly substituted. Unfortunately, the reception given to the ten minutes bill was, as we have told already, utterly discouraging. It was clear to Mr. Disraeli's experienced eye that it had not a chance from either side of the House. Mr. Disraeli made up his mind, and Lord Derby assented. There was nothing to be done but to fall back on the comprehensive measure. Unwilling colleagues must only act upon their convictions and go. It would be idle to secure their co-operation by persevering farther with a bill that no one would have. Therefore it was that on February 26 Mr. Disraeli withdrew his bill of the day before, the ten minutes bill, and announced that the Government would go to work in good earnest, and bring in a real bill on March 18. This proved to be the bill based on the resolutions; the comprehensive bill, which had been suddenly put out of sight at the hasty meeting of the Cabinet on Monday, February 25, as described in the artless and unforgotten eloquence of Sir John Pakington's Droitwich speech. Then General Peel, Lord Carnarvon, and Lord Cranborne resigned their offices. Lord Carnarvon explained that he did not object to have the franchise lowered, but he objected to a measure which seemed to him to leave all the political power divided between the rich and the poor, reducing to powerlessness the influence of all the intervening classes. The objection of Lord Cranborne has already been explained. General Peel, a man of straightforward, honourable character, and good abilities, was opposed to what he regarded as the distinctly democratic character of the bill. For the second time within ten years a Conservative

Cabinet had been split up on a question of Reform and the Borough Franchise.

It must be owned that it required some courage and nerve on Mr. Disraeli's part to face the House of Commons with another scheme and a newly-constructed Cabinet, after all these surprises. The first thing to do was to reorganise the Cabinet by getting a new War Secretary, Colonial Secretary, and Secretary for India. Before March 8 this was accomplished. The men who had resigned carried with them into their retirement the respect of all their political opponents. During his short administration of India, Lord Cranborne had shown not merely capacity, for that every-one knew he possessed, but a gravity, self-restraint, and sense of responsibility, for which even his friends had not previously given him credit. Sir John Pakington, as we have already mentioned, became War Minister, Mr. Corry succeeding him as First Lord of the Admiralty. The Duke of Buckingham—the Lord Chandos whose maiden speech, in the great debate of Thursday, June 25, 1846, which closed the Peel Administration, Mr. Disraeli has described in his 'Lord George Bentinck'—became Colonial Secretary. The administration of the India Department was transferred to Sir Stafford Northcote, whose place at the head of the Board of Trade thus vacated was taken by the Duke of Richmond.

Then, having thrown their mutineers overboard, the Government went to work again at their Reform scheme. On March 18 Mr. Disraeli introduced the bill. As regarded the franchise, this measure proposed that in boroughs all who paid rates, or twenty shillings a year in direct taxation, should have the vote; and also that property in the funds and savings' banks, and so forth, should be honoured with the franchise; and that there should be a certain educational franchise as well. The clauses for the extension of the franchise were counterbalanced and fenced around with all manner of ingeniously devised qualifications to prevent the force of numbers among the poorer classes from having too much of its own way. There was a disheartening elaborateness of ingenuity in all these devices. The machine was far too daintily adjusted; the checks and balances were too cleverly arranged by half; it was apparent to almost every eye that some parts of the mechanism would infallibly get out of working order, and that some others would never get into it. Mr. Bright compared the whole scheme to a plan for offering something with one hand and quietly withdrawing it with the other. There was, however, one aspect of the situation which to many Reformers seemed decidedly hopeful. It was plain to them now that the Government were determined to do anything whatever in order to get a Reform Bill of some kind passed that year. They would have anything which could command a majority rather that nothing. Lord

Derby afterwards frankly admitted that he did not see why a monopoly of Reform should be left to the Liberals; and Mr. Disraeli had clearly made up his mind that he would not go out of office this time on a Reform Bill. How little idea some of his colleagues had of whither they were drifting may be understood from a speech made by Lord Stanley on March 5, after the resignation of Lord Cranborne and the others. If, he said, Mr. Lowe, or any of those who sat near him, believed seriously 'that it is the intention of the Government to bring in a bill which shall be in accordance with the view which has always been so ably and so consistently advocated by the member for Birmingham (Mr. Bright), they are greatly mistaken.' It will be seen before long that the Government consented to carry a measure going much farther in the direction of democracy than anything that had been ably and consistently advocated by the member for Birmingham. Mr. Disraeli himself could not possibly have had any idea at first of the length to which he would be induced to go. He told Lord Cranborne, and with especial emphasis, at one stage of the debates, that the Government would never introduce household suffrage pure and simple. The bill became in the end a measure to establish household suffrage pure and simple in the towns.

The leading spirits of the Government were now determined to carry a Reform Bill that session, come what would. They were partly influenced, no doubt, by the conviction that it was better to settle the question on some terms, once for all, and let the country have done with it. But, as they themselves avowed more than once, they were also influenced by the idea that if the country would have Reform, the men in office might as well keep in office and give it to them. This is not high-minded statesmanship, to be sure; but high-minded statesmanship not uncommonly conducts men out of office, instead of keeping them in it. One by one, all Mr. Disraeli's checks, balances, and securities were abandoned. The dual vote, a proposal to give a double-voting power in boroughs to a ratepaying occupier who also paid 20*s.* of assessed taxes, was laughed out of the Bill. The voting-paper principle was abandoned. The fancy franchises were swept clear away. A lodger franchise was introduced. At last it came to a struggle about the nature of the main franchise in boroughs. The bill fixed it that anyone rated to the relief of the poor in a borough should have the vote, provided that he had lived two years in the house for which he was rated. An amendment, reducing the two years of qualification to one, was carried in the teeth of the Government by a large majority. The Government, therefore, agreed to accept the amendment. At various stages of the bill Mr. Disraeli kept announcing that if this or that amendment were carried against the Government, the Government would not go

any farther with the bill; but when the particular amendment was carried, Mr. Disraeli always announced that Ministers had changed their minds after all, and were willing to accept the new alteration. At last this little piece of formality began to be regarded by the House as mere ceremonial. The borough franchise was now reduced to household suffrage with a qualification; but that qualification was one of great importance. If Mr. Disraeli could succeed in inducing the House to admit the qualification, he would have good reason to say that he had kept his promise to Lord Cranborne, and that he had not consented to accept household suffrage pure and simple. The clause as it now stood excluded from the franchise the compound householder. The compound householder figures largely in the debates of that session. The controversialists on both sides battled for him, and around him, like the Greeks and Trojans fighting round the body of Patroclus. He sprang at once into prominence and into history. He and his claims were the theme of discussion and conversation everywhere. Those who did not know what the compound householder was could not possibly have understood the Reform debates of 1867. The story goes that a witty public man being asked by a French friend to explain who the compound householder was, described him as the male of the *femme incomprise*. The compound householder, in plain fact, was the occupier of one of the small houses the tenants of which were not themselves rated to the relief of the poor. By certain Acts of Parliament the owners of small houses were allowed to compound for their rates. The landlord became himself responsible to the parochial authorities, and not the tenant. He paid up the rates on a number of those tenements, and he received a certain reduction in consideration of his assuming the responsibility and saving the local authorities the trouble of collecting by paying up the amounts in a lump sum. As a matter of fact, it need hardly be said that the occupier did actually pay the rates; for the landlord took good care to add the amount in each case to the rent he demanded; but the occupier's name did not appear on the rate-book, nor had he any direct dealing with the parish authorities. The compound householders were so numerous that they were said actually to constitute two-thirds of all the occupiers under 10*l*. In some boroughs, it was stated, an occupier's franchise excluding compound householders would suddenly reduce with sweeping hand the number of existing voters, and the Reform Bill of Lord Derby's Government would be a disfranchising, instead of an enfranchising, measure.

A meeting of the Liberal party was held at Mr. Gladstone's house to decide upon the course which should be taken. Mr. Gladstone had a device of his own to meet the difficulty. His idea was that a line should be drawn, below which houses should not be rated in any form; but that

in every case where a house was rated, the occupier should be entitled to a vote, whether he or his landlord paid the rates. Mr. Gladstone was anxious that the very poorest occupiers should at once be relieved of the obligation to pay rates and not allowed to give a vote. He, and Mr. Bright as well, were haunted by the fear of carrying the vote down too low in the social scale, and introducing to the franchise that class which Mr. Bright described as the *residuum* of the constituency. Now it must be remembered that the Liberal party, if they acted together, could command a majority. They were, therefore, in a position to compel Mr. Disraeli to adopt the principle recommended by Mr. Gladstone. But a remarkable difference of opinion suddenly sprang up. After the meeting at Mr. Gladstone's house a group made up principally of the more advanced Liberals began to doubt the advantage of Mr. Gladstone's proposed low-water line. They thought it would be better to let all householders in boroughs have the vote without distinction. They held a meeting of their own in the tea-room of the House of Commons, and they resolved to inform Mr. Gladstone that they could not support his amendment. They were known from that time forth as the 'Tea-Room Party;' and they came in for nearly as much condemnation as if they had been concerned in a new Gunpowder Plot. By their secession Mr. Gladstone's scheme was defeated, and it was made certain that there were not to be two classes of householders, the rated and the unrated, in the boroughs. A bold attempt was made then to get rid of the compounding system altogether; and at length, to the surprise of all parties, the Government yielded to the pressure. They undertook to abolish the system absolutely, to have the name of every occupier put on the rate-book, to give every occupier the vote, and, in a word, to establish household suffrage pure and simple in the borough constituencies. The Tea-Room Party had conquered both ways. They had prevailed against Mr. Gladstone, and prevailed over Mr. Disraeli.

Many hard words, as we have said, were flung at the Tea-Room Party. Mr. Bright denounced them in severe and scornful language, and asked what could be done in Parliamentary politics if every man was to pursue his own little game? 'A costermonger and donkey,' Mr. Bright said, 'would take a week to travel from here to London' (he was addressing a meeting in Birmingham); 'and yet, by running athwart the London and North-Western line, they might bring to total destruction a great express train.' 'Thus,' he went on to say, 'very small men, who during their whole political lives have not advanced the question of Reform by one hair's-breadth, or by one moment in time, can at a critical hour like this throw themselves athwart the objects of a great party, and mar, it

may be, a great measure that ought to affect the interests of the country beneficially for all time.' The Tea-Room Party ventured, no doubt, upon a serious Parliamentary responsibility when they thus struck out a little policy for themselves independently of their leaders. Yet it can hardly be questioned now that they were in the right as regards their principle. It was a great advantage to get rid of all complications, and all various graduations of franchise, and come at once to the intelligible point of household suffrage. As Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright had themselves admitted and argued at various stages of the debates, it was decidedly objectionable to have the question of franchise mixed up with varying parochial arrangements of any kind, and left to depend on the views of a vestry here and a vestry there. Nor were the Tea-Room Party mutineers who by their conduct had enabled the enemy to triumph. On the contrary, they were at the worst only adventurous volunteers who at some risk had won a more decided victory over the enemy than their regular chiefs once ventured to think possible. Certain of them were, perhaps, a little inclined to give themselves airs, because of the risk they had run and the success they had won. But it is only justice to some of them at least to say that they had acted from deliberate calculation as well as from a sense of duty. They were convinced that the Government, if pressed, would give in to anything rather than allow the bill to be defeated; and they thought they saw a sudden and secure opportunity for establishing the borough franchise at once on the sound and simple basis of household suffrage.

The struggle now was practically over. The bill had become from a sham a reality; from unmeaning complication it had grown into straightforward clearness. It accomplished a great purpose by establishing a sound principle. It had gone much farther in the way of pure democracy than Mr. Bright had ever proposed, or probably ever desired, to go. During the discussions Mr. Mill introduced an amendment to admit women who were registered occupiers as well as men to the franchise; in other words, to make the qualification one of occupation only, without reference to sex. The majority of the House were at first disposed to regard this proposition as something merely droll, and to deal with it only in the spirit of pleasantry, and with facetious commentary; but the debate proved a very interesting, grave, and able discussion, and it was the opening of a momentous chapter of political controversy. Mr. Mill got seventy-three members to follow him into the lobby; and although 196 voted the other way, he was probably well content with the result of the debate. He also raised the question of the representation of minorities, but he did not press it to any positive test. It had, however, a certain

distinct triumph before the completion of the measure. When the bill went up to the House of Lords, Lord Cairns moved an amendment to the effect that in places returning three members no elector should vote for more than two. This amendment was carried, although Mr. Disraeli had announced beforehand that the Government thought such an arrangement would be 'erroneous in principle and pernicious in practice;' and although it had been strongly opposed by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright. The new principle, it will be seen, acknowledges the propriety of securing a certain proportion of representation to minorities. In a constituency with three representatives each elector votes for only two. Obviously, then, the third is the representative of a minority. It does not by any means follow, however, that he is always the representative of a minority differing in political opinions from the majority. In some of the constituencies to which the bill gave three members, it so happens that there is a majority of one way of thinking large enough to secure the return of all three members. There are electors enough for one party to secure a majority to the two candidates who are especially popular, and yet to spare as many votes as will enable them to carry a third candidate also. Thus the new principle does not in practice always accomplish the object for which it was intended. Indeed, it is plain that in the very instances in which the advocates of the representation of minorities would most desire to secure it—those of places where the minority had before no chance of obtaining any expression of their views—they would still have little chance under the new arrangement, and would be most easily overborne by combination, discipline, and skill on the part of the majority. The new arrangement was of moment, however, as the first recognition of a principle which may possibly yet have a fuller development; and which if it does can hardly fail to have a serious effect on the present system of government by party. One or two clauses of some importance, not bearing on the general question of Reform, were introduced. It was established that Parliament need not dissolve on the death of the Sovereign, and that members holding places of profit from the Crown need not vacate their seats on the acceptance of another office; on their merely passing from one department to another. This was a reasonable and judicious alteration. It is of great importance that when a member of Parliament joins an Administration, he should give his constituents an opportunity of saying whether they are content to be represented by a member of the Government. But when they have answered that question in the affirmative, it can hardly be necessary to undergo the cost and trouble of a new election if their representative happens to be transferred from one office to another. A constituency may have good reason for

refusing to elect a member of the Administration; but they can hardly have any good reason for rejecting a Secretary for the Colonies whom they were willing to retain as their representative while he was Secretary for India. We are glad, however, that the change in the law was not made a little sooner. History could ill have spared Sir John Pakington's speech at his re-election for Droitwich.

The Reform Bill passed through its final stage on August 15, 1867. We may summarise its results thus concisely. It enfranchised in boroughs all male householders rated for the relief of the poor, and all lodgers resident for one year, and paying not less than 10*l.* a year rent; and in counties, persons of property of the clear annual value of 5*l.*, and occupiers of lands or tenements paying 12*l.* a year. It disfranchised certain small boroughs, and reduced the representation of other constituencies; it created several new constituencies; among others the borough of Chelsea and the borough of Hackney. It gave a third member to Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Leeds; it gave a representative to the University of London. It enacted that where there were to be three representatives, each elector should vote for only two candidates; and that in the City of London, which has four members, each elector should only vote for three. The Irish and Scotch Reform Bills were put off for another year. We may, however, anticipate a little, and dispose of the Scotch and Irish Bills at once; the more especially as both, but especially the Irish Bill, proved to be very trivial and unsatisfactory. The Scotch Bill gave Scotland a borough franchise the same as that of England; and a county franchise based either on 5*l.* clear annual value of property, or an occupation of 14*l.* a year. The Government proposed at first to make the county occupation franchise the same as that in England. All qualification as to rating for the poor was, however, struck out of the bill by amendments, the rating systems of Scotland being unlike those of England. The Government then put in 14*l.* as the equivalent of the English occupier's 12*l.* rating franchise. Some new seats were given to Scotland, which the Government at first proposed to get by increasing the number of members of the House of Commons, but which they were forced by amendments to obtain by the disfranchisement of some small English boroughs. The Irish Bill is hardly worth mentioning. It left the county franchise as it was, 12*l.*, reduced the borough franchise from 8*l.* to 4*l.*, and did nothing in the way of redistribution.

While the English Reform Bill was passing through its several stages, the Government went deliberately out of their way to make themselves again ridiculous with regard to the public meetings in Hyde Park. The Reform League convened a public meeting to be held in that park on

May 6. Mr. Walpole, on May 1, issued a proclamation intended to prevent the meeting, and warning all persons not to attend it. The League took legal advice, found that their meeting would not be contrary to law, and accordingly issued a counter-proclamation asserting their right, and declaring that the meeting would be held in order to maintain it. The Government found out a little too late that the League had strict law on their side. The law gave to the Crown control over the parks, and the right of prosecuting trespassers of any kind; but it gave the Administration no power to anticipate trespass from the holding of a public meeting and to prohibit it in advance. The meeting was held; it was watched by a large body of police and soldiers; but it passed over very quietly, and indeed to curious spectators looking for excitement seemed a very humdrum sort of affair. Mr. Walpole, the Home Secretary, who had long been growing weary of the thankless troubles of his office at a time of such excitement, and who was not strong enough to face the difficulties of the hour, resigned his post. Mr. Walpole retained, however, his seat in the Cabinet. 'He will sit on these benches,' said Mr. Disraeli, in announcing to the House of Commons his colleague's resignation of the Home Office; 'and although not a minister of the Crown, he will be one of her Majesty's responsible advisers.' He was a man highly esteemed by all parties; a man of high principle and of amiable character. But he was not equal to the occasion when any difficulty arose, and he contrived to put himself almost invariably in the wrong when dealing with the Reform League. He exerted his authority at a wrong time, and in a wrong way; and he generally withdrew from his wrong position in somewhat too penitent and humble an attitude. He strained too far the authority of his place, and he did not hold high enough its dignity. He was succeeded in office by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, who left the Poor Law Board to become Home Secretary.

The Reform Bill then was passed. The 'leap in the dark' was taken. Thus did the Prime Minister, Lord Derby, describe the policy of himself and his colleagues. The phrase has become historical, and its authorship is invariably ascribed to Lord Derby. It was in fact Lord Cranborne who first used it. During the debates in the House of Commons he had taunted the Government with taking a leap in the dark. Lord Derby adopted the expression, and admitted it to be a just description of the movement which he and his Ministry had made. It is impossible to deny that the Government acted sagaciously in settling the question so promptly and so decisively; in agreeing to almost anything rather than postpone the settlement of the controversy even for another year. But one is still lost in wonder at the boldness, the audacity, with which the

Conservative Government threw away in succession every principle which they had just been proclaiming essential to Conservatism and put on Radicalism as a garment. On a memorable occasion Mr. Disraeli said that Peel caught the Whigs bathing and walked away with their clothes. Now he himself had ventured on a still less scrupulous act of spoliation. He helped to turn the Whigs out of their clothes in order that he might get into the garments. Nothing could have been more surprising than the courage with which he undertook the series of transformations, unless, perhaps, the elaborate simplicity with which towards the end he represented himself as one who was acting in the truest spirit of consistency. Few could help being impressed, or at least imposed upon, by the calm earnestness of his declarations. Juvenal's Greek deceived the very eyesight of the spectators by the cleverness of his personation. Mr. Disraeli was almost equally successful. The success was not, perhaps, likely to conduce to an exalted political morality. The one thing, however, which most people were thinking of in the autumn of 1867 was that the Reform question was settled at last, and for a long time. Nothing more would be heard of the unenfranchised millions and the noble working man, on the one hand; of the swart mechanic's bloody thumbs and the reign of anarchy, on the other. Mr. Lowe is entitled to the last word of the controversy. The working men, the majority, the people who live in the small houses, are enfranchised; 'we must now,' Mr. Lowe said, 'at least educate our new masters.'

CHAPTER LIII.

THE FENIAN MOVEMENT.

The session of Parliament which passed the Reform Bill was not many days over when the country was startled by the news that a prison van had been stopped and broken open under broad day in Manchester, and two political prisoners rescued from the custody of the police. The political prisoners were Fenians. We have spoken already of the Fenian movement as one of the troubles now gathering around the path of successive Governments. It was at an early period of Lord Russell's administration that the public first heard anything substantial about the movement. On February 16, 1866, Parliament was surprised not a little by an announcement which the Government had to make. Lord Russell told the House of Lords, and Sir George Grey announced to the House of Commons, that the Government intended to suspend the *Habeas Corpus* Act in Ireland,

and that both Houses of Parliament were to be called together next day for the purpose of enabling the Ministry to carry out this resolve. The next day was Saturday, an unusual day for a Parliamentary sitting at any early part of the session; unusual, indeed, when the session had only just begun. The Government could only excuse such a summons to the Lords and Commons on the plea of absolute urgency; and the word soon went round in the lobbies that a serious discovery had been made; and that a conspiracy of a formidable nature was preparing a rebellion in Ireland. The two Houses met next day, and a measure was introduced to suspend the *Habeas Corpus* Act in Ireland, and give the Lord-Lieutenant almost unlimited power to arrest and detain suspected persons. The measure was run through its three readings in both Houses in the course of the day. The House of Lords had to keep up their sitting until the document should arrive from Osborne to authorise the Commissioners to give the Queen's assent to the bill. The Lords, therefore, having discussed the subject sufficiently to their satisfaction at a comparatively early hour of the evening, suspended the sitting until eleven at night. They then resumed, and waited patiently for the authority to come from Osborne, where the Queen was staying. Shortly before midnight the needful authority arrived, and the bill became law at twenty minutes before one o'clock on Sunday morning.

It seems almost superfluous to say that such a bill was not allowed to pass without some comment, and even some opposition, in the House of Commons. Mr. Bright made a speech which has always since been regarded as in every sense one of the very finest he ever delivered. That was the speech in which he declared his conviction that, 'if the majority of the people of Ireland, counted fairly out, had their will and had the power, they would unmoor the island from its fastenings in the deep, and move it at least two thousand miles to the west.' That was in itself a sufficiently humiliating confession for an English statesman to have to make. It was not humiliating to Mr. Bright personally; for he had always striven to obtain such legislation for Ireland as should enable her to feel that hers was a friendly partnership with England, and not a compulsory and unequal connection. But it was humbling to any Englishman of spirit and sense to have to acknowledge that, after so many years and centuries of experiment and failure, the Government of England had not yet learned the way to keep up the connection between the countries without coercion acts and measures of repression in Ireland. No Englishman who puts the question fairly to his conscience will deny that, if he were considering a matter that concerned a foreign country and a foreign Government, he would regard the mere fact as a condemnation of its

system of rule. It would be idle to try to persuade him that it was all the fault of the Poles if the Russians had to govern by mere force in Poland; all the fault of the Venetians if the Austrians could never get beyond a mere encampment in Venetia. His strong common sense, unclouded in such a case by prejudice, would at once enable him to declare with conviction, that where, after long trial, a State cannot govern a population except by sheer force, the cause must be sought in the badness of the governing system rather than in the perversity of human nature among the governed. Mr. Mill, who spoke in the same debate, put the matter effectively enough when he observed that if the captain of a ship, or the master of a school, has continually to have recourse to violent measures to to keep crew or boys in order, we assume, without asking for further evidence, that there is something wrong in his system of management. Mr. Mill dwelt with force and justice on one possible explanation of the difficulty which English Governments seem always to encounter in Ireland. He spoke of the 'eternal political *non possumus*' which English statesmen opposed to every special demand for legislation in Ireland; a *non possumus* which, as he truly said, only means, 'we don't do it in England.'

The *Habeas Corpus* Act was, therefore, suspended once more in Ireland. The Government acknowledged that they had to deal with a new rebellion in that country. That rebellion this time might have sprung up from the ground, so suddenly did the knowledge of it seem to have come upon the vast majority of the public here. Yet there had for a long time been symptoms enough to give warning of such a movement, and it soon proved to be formidable to a degree which not many even then suspected.

The Fenian movement differed from nearly all previous movements of the same kind in Ireland, in the fact that it arose and grew into strength without the patronage or the help of any of those who might be called the natural leaders of the people. In 1798 and in 1848 the rebellion bore unmistakably what may be called the 'follow-my-leader' character. Some men of great ability, or strength of purpose, or high position, or all attributes combined, made themselves leaders, and the others followed. In 1798 the rising had the impulse of almost intolerable personal as well as national grievance; but it is doubtful whether any formidable and organised movement might have been made but for the leadership of such men as Wolfe Tone and Lord Edward Fitzgerald. In 1848 there were such impulses as the traditional leadership of Smith O'Brien, the indomitable purpose of Mitchel, and the impassioned eloquence of Meagher. But Fenianism seemed to have sprung out of the very soil of Ireland itself. Its leaders were not men of high position, or distinguished name, or proved ability.

They were not of aristocratic birth; they were not orators; they were not powerful writers. It was not the impulse of the American Civil War that engendered Fenianism; although that war had great influence on the manner in which Fenianism shaped its course. Fenianism had been in existence, in fact, although it had not got its peculiar name, long before the American War created a new race of Irishmen—the Irish-American soldiers—to turn their energies and their military inclination to a new purpose.

Agitation in the form of secret association had never ceased in Ireland. One result of prosecutions for seditious speaking and writing in Ireland is invariably the encouragement of secret combination. Whether it be right or wrong, necessary or unnecessary, to prosecute for seditious speaking or writing in Ireland, is not a matter with which we have to concern ourselves when we make this statement. We state a fact which cannot be controverted. It is assuredly a fact to be taken into the gravest consideration by those who are entrusted with the maintenance of order. It ought at least to impress them with a sense of the necessity for being cautious how they run the risk of Government prosecutions for mere indiscretions of pen or tongue. 'When popular discontents are abroad,' said Curran, condemning the policy of the Irish Administration of his day, 'a wise Government would put them into a hive of glass; you hid them.' The suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, in consequence of the 1848 movement, led, as a matter of course, to secret association. Before the trials of the Irish leaders were well over in that year, a secret association was formed by a large number of young Irishmen in cities and towns. It was got up by young men of good character and education; it spread from town to town; it was conducted with the most absolute secresy; it had no informer in its ranks. It had its oath of fidelity and its regular leaders, its nightly meetings, and even to a limited and cautious extent its nightly drillings. It was a failure, because in the nature of things it could not be anything else. The young men had not arms enough anywhere to render them formidable in any one place; and the necessity of carrying on their communications with different towns in profound secresy, and by roundabout ways of communication, made a prompt concerted action impossible. After two or three attempts to arrange for a simultaneous rising had failed, or had ended only in little abortive and isolated ebullitions, the young men became discouraged. Some of the leaders went to France, some to the United States, some actually to England; and the association melted away. That was the happiest end it could possibly have had. Concerted action would only have meant the useless waste of a few scores or hundreds of brave young lives. Some years after this, the 'Phœnix' clubs began to be formed in Ireland.

They were for the most part associations of the peasant class, and were on that account, perhaps, the more formidable and earnest; for the secret association of which we have already spoken was mainly the creation of young men of a certain culture who felt ashamed and disappointed that the Young Ireland movement should have ended without a more gallant display of arms. The Phœnix clubs led to some of the ordinary prosecutions and convictions; and that was all. Up to that time it did not seem to have entered into the mind of any official English statesman that such things might possibly be a consequence and not a cause. It was thought enough to put them down and punish them when they came. It was accounted an offence against law and order hardly less flagrant than that of the secret agitators themselves to ask whether, perhaps, there was not some real cause for all this agitation, with which serious statesmanship could easily deal if it only took a little honest thought and trouble. After the Phœnix associations came the Fenians. 'This is a serious business now,' said a clever English literary man when he heard of the Fenian organisation; 'the Irish have got hold of a good name this time; the Fenians will last.' The Fenians are said to have been the ancient Irish militia. In Scott's 'Antiquary,' Hector M'Intyre, jealous for the honour and the genuineness of Ossian's songs of Selma, recites a part of one in which Ossian asks St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, whether he ventures to compare his psalms 'to the tales of the bare-armed Fenians.' There can be no doubt that the tales of the bare-armed Fenians were passed from mouth to mouth of the Celts in Ireland and the highlands of Scotland, from a time long before that at which any soothsayer or second-sighted sage could have dreamed of the landing of Strongbow and the perfidy of the wife of Breffni. There was an air of Celtic antiquity and of mystery about the name of Fenian which merited the artistic approval given to it by the impartial English writer whose observation has just been quoted. The Fenian agitation began about 1858, and it came to perfection about the middle of the American Civil War. It was ingeniously arranged on a system by which all authority converged towards one centre, and those farthest away from the seat of direction knew proportionately less and less about the nature of the plans. They had to obey instructions only, and it was hoped by this means weak or doubtful men would not have it in their power prematurely to reveal, to betray, or to thwart the purposes of their leaders. A convention was held in America, and the Fenian Association was resolved into a regular organised institution. A provisional government was established in the neighbourhood of Union Square, New York, with all the array and mechanism of an actual working administration. Soon after this there began to be frequent visitations of mysterious strangers to Ireland.

The emigration of the Irish to America had introduced an entirely new element into political calculations. One of the men of 1848, who took refuge in the United States at first, and who afterwards went to Canada and became very influential there, wrote home from New York to say that 'we have the long arm of the lever here.' There was much truth in this view of the state of things. The Irish grew rapidly in numbers and in strength all over the United States. The constitutional system adopted there enabled them almost at once to become citizens of the Republic. They availed themselves of this privilege almost universally. The American political system, whatever may be thought of its various merits or defects, is peculiarly adapted to fill the populations with a quick interest in politics. There are undoubtedly certain classes among the wealthier who are so engrossed in money-making and in business as to have little time left to trouble themselves about politics; and there are many who, out of genuine or affected distaste for noisy controversy and the crowd, hold aloof deliberately from all political organisations. But the working part of the community, especially in the cities, are almost invariably politicians. Every election, every political trial of strength, has its practical beginning at the primary meetings of the electors of each place. These meetings are attended largely, one might almost say mainly, by the humbler classes of voters. From the primary meeting to the fall elections, and from the ordinary fall elections to the choice of the President, the system is so adjusted as to take the humblest voter along with it. The Irish workingman, who had never probably had any chance of giving a vote in his own country, found himself in the United States a person of political power, whose vote was courted by the leaders of different parties, and whose sentiments were flattered by the wire-pullers of opposing factions. He was not slow to appreciate the value of this influence in its bearing on that political question which in all the sincerity of his American citizenship was still the dearest to his heart—the condition of Ireland. In the United States—we do not say in Canada—the differences between Irishmen of different religions and factions have not much interfered with their views on purely Irish questions. Dislike of England, or at least of English governments, prevails among many Irishmen from the northern province settled in the United States, who assuredly, if they had remained at home, would have brought up their children in devotion to English rule and the traditions of the House of Orange. But of course the vast, the overwhelming majority of the Irish in America is made up of men who have come from the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, and whose anti-English sentiments have only become stronger and stronger in proportion to the length of time and distance that divided them from their old

home. If it were to be distinctly declared that every Irishman in the United States was in his heart an enemy of England, there might probably be found instances enough the other way to discredit the literal accuracy of the assertion. But we know with what contempt Dr. Johnson spoke of the literal accuracy which replied to the statement that a certain orchard contained no fruit, by showing that it actually had three apples and four pears. To all who do not insist on that sort of accuracy it will be proper to say that, speaking generally, all the Irish population in the United States is animated by feelings of hostility to English dominion in Ireland. Filled with this feeling, the Irish in the States made their political organisations the means of keeping up a constant agitation, having for its object to secure the co-operation of American parties in some designs against England. One of the great political parties into which the Northern States were divided made it a part of their electioneering business to conciliate the Irish vote in the populous cities. They professed great affection for Ireland and sympathy with Irish grievances; they gave the word of order to their American followers to patronise the Irish; their leaders were often to be seen on the platform at Irish meetings; the municipal authorities of some of the great towns took part in the Irish processions on St. Patrick's Day; more than once the American mayor of an American city exhibited himself arrayed in garments of green on that anniversary. The Irish vote was at one time absolutely necessary to the democratic party in the States; and the democratic party were ready to give a seeming countenance to any scheme which happened for the moment to allure the hopes of the Irish populations. After the Civil War the feelings of almost all the political parties in the States, in the South as well as in the North, were hostile to England. At such a moment, and under such a condition of things, it cannot be matter of surprise if the hopes of the Irish populations were excited to the highest degree. The confidence felt by so many persons in this country that the *Alabama* controversy had been dropped for ever by American statesmen, had not the slightest support from the bearing or resolve of any of the great American parties. It is quite easy to imagine a condition of things just then, which would have led a light-hearted American president to try to bring together all classes of the American population in a war against England. The length of the almost indefensible Canadian frontier line would have given America the immense advantage of being able to choose her own battle-ground. Such a war would at one time have been welcomed with enthusiasm all over the States. The objections of calm and cautious minds would have been borne down and swept away in a very wave of popular passion. It is not surprising if, under such circumstances, many

of the Fenian leaders in America should have thought it easy to force the hand of the Government, and to bring on a war with England. At all events, it is not surprising if they should have believed that the American Government would put forth little effort to prevent the Fenians from using the frontier of the United States as a basis of operations against England.

The Civil War had introduced a new figure to the world's stage. This was the Irish-American soldier. He had the bright, humorous countenance of the Celt, with the peculiar litheness and military swagger of the American 'boy in blue.' He had some of the American shrewdness grafted on to his Irish love of adventure. In thousands of cases he spoke with an American accent, and had never set foot on the soil of that Ireland from which his fathers came, and which, to do him justice, he loved with a passion at once romantic and sincere. He might have fought for the North, or he might have fought for the South. He might have ranged himself under the colours borne by Thomas Francis Meagher—'Meagher of the Sword'—or he might have followed the fearless lead of 'Pat Cleburne.' Perhaps he was one of the Irish brigade who joined in the desperate charges up the heights of Fredericksburg; or perhaps he was one of the equally brave men who successfully held those heights for the South. It was all the same when the interests of Ireland came to be concerned: he was ready to forget all differences in a companionship on that question. Many of these men—thousands of them—were as sincerely patriotic in their way as they were simple and brave. It is needless to say that they were fastened on in some instances by adventurers, who fomented the Fenian movement out of the merest and the meanest self-seeking. Men swaggered about Union Square, New York, as Fenian leaders, who had not the faintest notion of risking their own valuable lives in any quarrel more dignified than a bar-room row in the Sixth Ward—the 'Big Sixth' of New York. Some were making a living out of the organisation—out of that, and apparently nothing else. The contributions given by poor Irish hack-drivers and servant girls, in the sincere belief that they were helping to man the ranks of an Irish army of independence, enabled some of these self-appointed leaders to wear fine clothes and to order expensive dinners. Of course something of this kind is to be said of every such organisation. It is especially likely to be true of any organisation got up in a country like America, where the field of agitation is open to everybody alike, with little of authority or prescription to govern the taking of places. But, in the main, it is only fair to say that the Fenian movement in the United States was got up, organised, and manned by persons who, however they may have been mistaken as to their ends and misguided as to their means, were single-hearted, unselfish, and faithfully

devoted to their cause. It is necessary that this should be said somewhat emphatically; for the mind of the English public has always been curiously misled with regard to the character of the Fenian organisation. In this, as in other instances, the public conscience of England has too often been lulled to sleep by the assurance that all who reject the English point of view must be either fools or knaves, and that there is no occasion for sensible men to take any account of their demands or their protestations. It may be well, too, to emphasize the fact that the plans of the Fenians were not by any means the fantastically foolish projects that it is the custom here to believe them. They resembled in some respects the projects of the Polish insurgents, which we have described in another chapter of this work. Like the Polish schemes, they were founded on calculations which did not turn out as might have been expected, but which, nevertheless, might very easily have come right. The Polish rebellion was started in the hope that some of the European powers would come to the help of Poland; and no European power did come to its help. But there was at one time, as we know now, a very great chance indeed that such help would be strongly given. The Fenian rising was inspired by the hope that the United States and England would be at war; and we know now that they were more than once on the very verge of war. It is, we believe, quite certain that the officers were already named by the American authorities who were to have conducted an invasion of Canada. Those who did not happen to have known America and American life in the days shortly after the close of the Civil War, can have hardly any idea of the bitterness of feeling against England that prevailed then all over the States, in the South just as much as in the North. If the English Government had peremptorily and absolutely rejected the idea of arbitration with regard to the *Alabama* claims, at any time between 1865 and 1868, it is all but certain that America would have declared war. An American invasion of Canada would have made a Fenian rising in Ireland a very different trouble from that which under the actual conditions it afterwards proved to be.

Meanwhile there began to be a constant mysterious influx of strangers into Ireland. They were strangers who for the most part had Celtic features and the bearing of American soldiers. They distributed themselves throughout the towns and villages; most of them had relatives or old friends here and there, to whom they told stories of the share they had had in the big wars across the Atlantic and of the preparations that were making in the States for the accomplishment of Irish independence. All this time the Fenians in the States were filling the columns of friendly journals with accounts of the growth of their organisation and announce-

ments of the manner in which it was to be directed to its purpose. After a while things went so far that the Fenian leaders in the United States issued an address, announcing that their officers were going to Ireland to raise an army there for the recovery of the country's independence. Of course the Government here were soon quite prepared to receive them; and indeed the authorities easily managed to keep themselves informed by means of spies of all that was going on in Ireland. The spy system was soon flourishing in full force. Every considerable gathering of Fenians had amongst its numbers at least one person who generally professed a yet fiercer devotion to the cause than any of the rest, and who was in the habit of carrying to Dublin Castle every night his official report of what his Fenian colleagues had been doing. It is positively stated that in one instance a Protestant detective in the pay of the Government actually passed himself off as a Catholic, and took the Sacrament openly in a Catholic church in order to establish his Catholic orthodoxy in the eyes of his companions. One need not be a Catholic in order to understand the grossness of the outrage which conduct like this must seem to be in the eyes of all who believe in the mysteries of the Catholic faith. Meanwhile the Head Centre of Fenianism in America, James Stephens, who had borne a part in the movement of 1848, arrived in Ireland. He was arrested in company of Mr. James Kickham, the author of many poems of great sweetness and beauty; a man of pure and virtuous character. Stephens was committed to Richmond Prison, Dublin, early in November, 1865; but before many days had passed the country was startled by the news that he had contrived to make his escape. The escape was planned with skill and daring. For a time it helped to strengthen the impression on the mind of the Irish peasantry that in Stephens there had at last been found an insurgent leader of adequate courage, craft, and good fortune.

Stephens disappeared for a moment from the stage. In the meantime disputes and dissensions had arisen among the Fenians in America. The schism had gone so far as to lead to the setting up of two separate associations. There were of course distracted plans. One party was for an invasion of Canada; another pressed for operations in Ireland itself. The Canadian attempt actually was made. A small body of Fenians, a sort of advance-guard, crossed the Niagara river on the night of May 31, 1866, occupied Fort Erie, and drove back the Canadian volunteers who first advanced against them. For a moment a gleam of success shone on the attempt; but the United States enforced the neutrality of their frontier line with a sudden energy and strictness wholly unexpected by the Fenians. They prevented any further crossing of the river, and arrested several of the leaders on the American side. The Canadian authorities hurried up rein-

forcements; several Fenians were taken and shot; others recrossed the river, and the invasion scheme was over.

Then Stephens came to the front again. It was only for a moment. He had returned to New York, and he now announced that he was determined to strike a blow in Ireland. Before long the impression was spread abroad that he had actually left the States to return to the scene of his proposed insurrection. The American-Irish kept streaming across the Atlantic, even in the stormy winter months, in the firm belief that before the winter had passed away, or at the farthest while the spring was yet young, Stephens would appear in Ireland at the head of an insurgent army. Not many, surely, of those actually living in Ireland could have had any faith in the possibility of such a movement having even a momentary success on Irish soil. All who knew anything of the condition of the country must have known that the peasantry were unarmed, and utterly unprepared for any such attempt; that the great majority of the populations everywhere were entirely opposed to such wild enterprises; that the Catholic clergy especially were endeavouring everywhere to keep their people back from secret organisation or insurrectionary scheme. But the Irish-Americans, who had made their way into Ireland, were for the most part not acquainted with the condition of the country; and it was owing to their presence and their influence that at length an attempt at rebellion was actually made. Stephens did not reappear in Ireland. He made no attempt to keep his warlike promise. He may be said to have disappeared from the history of Fenianism. But the preparations had gone too far to be suddenly stopped. Many of his followers were filled with shame at the collapse of the enterprise on which they had risked so much, and they were impatient to give some sign of their personal energy and sincerity. It was hastily decided that something should be done. One venture was a scheme for the capture of Chester Castle. The plan was that a sufficient number of the Fenians in England should converge towards the ancient town of Chester, should suddenly appear there on a given day in February, 1867, capture the castle, seize the arms they found there, cut the telegraph wires, make for Holyhead, but a short distance by rail, seize on some vessels there, and then steam for the Irish coast. The Government were fully informed of the plot in advance; the police were actually on the look-out for the arrival of strangers in Chester, and the enterprise melted away. In March, 1867, an attempt at a general rising was made in Ireland. It was a total failure; the one thing on which the country had to be congratulated was that it failed so completely and so quickly as to cause little bloodshed. Every influence combined to minimise the waste of life. The snow fell that spring as it had scarcely

ever fallen before in the soft, mild climate of Ireland. Silently, unceasingly it came down all day long and all night long; it covered the roads and the fields; it made the gorges of the mountains untenable, and the gorges of the mountains were to be the encampments and the retreats of the Fenian insurgents. The snow fell for many days and nights, and when it ceased falling the insurrectionary movement was over. The insurrection was literally buried in that unlooked-for snow. There were some attacks on police barracks in various places—in Cork, in Kerry, in Limerick, in Tipperary, in Louth; there were some conflicts with the police; there were some shots fired, many captures made, a few lives lost; and then for the time at least all was over. The Fenian attempt thus made had not from the beginning a shadow of hope to excuse it. Every patriotic Irishman of whatever party must have felt a sense of relief when it was evident that the insurrection was over and that so little harm had been done.

There was, however, much feeling in England as well as in Ireland for some of the Fenian leaders who now began to be put upon their trials. They bore themselves with manliness and dignity. Some of them had been brave soldiers in the American Civil War, and were entitled to wear honourable marks of distinction. Many had given up a successful career or a prosperous calling in the United States to take part in what they were led to believe would be the great national uprising of the Irish people. They spoke up with courage in the dock, and declared their perfect readiness to die for what they held to be a sacred cause. They indulged in no bravado and uttered no word of repining. All manhood should have deserted the English heart if the English people did not acknowledge some admiration for such men. Many did acknowledge such admiration freely and generally. The newspaper in London which most of all addresses itself to the gratification of the popular passion of the hour, frankly declared that the Fenian leaders were entitled to the respect of Englishmen because they had given such earnest of their sincerity, and such proof that they knew how to die. One of the leaders, Colonel Burke, who had served with distinction in the army of the Southern Confederation, was sentenced to death in May, 1867. A great public meeting was held in St. James's Hall, London, to adopt a memorial praying that the sentence might not be carried out. Among those who addressed the meeting was Mr. Mill. It was almost altogether an English meeting. The hall was crowded with English working-men. The Irish element had hardly any direct representation there. Yet there was absolute unanimity, there was intense enthusiasm, in favour of the mitigation of the sentence on Colonel Burke and his companions. The great hall rang with cheer

after cheer as Mr. Mill, in a voice made stronger than its wont by the intensity of his emotions, pleaded for a policy of mercy. It is satisfactory to be able to say that the voice of that great meeting was heard in the ministerial councils, and that the sentence of death was not inflicted.

Not many months after this event the world was roused to amazement by the news of the daring rescue of Fenian prisoners in Manchester. Two Fenian prisoners, named Kelly and Deasy, were being conveyed in the prison van from one of the police courts to the borough gaol to await further examination. On the way the van was stopped by a number of armed Fenians, who demanded the surrender of the prisoners. They surrounded the van, and endeavoured to break in the door of it. The door was locked on the inside, and the key was in the keeping of a police officer, Brett, who sat within. A shot was fired at the keyhole, probably in the hope of blowing off the lock—this was the opinion of one at least of the police who gave evidence—and poor Brett was just in the way of the bullet. The unfortunate policeman, who was only preparing to do his duty bravely by refusing to give up his charge, and by defending his position to the last, received a wound of which he died soon after. The doors were then opened, a woman prisoner in the van handing out the keys which she found in the pocket of the unfortunate officer; and the prisoners were rescued. 'Kelly, I'll die for you!' was the exclamation heard to be uttered by one of the Fenian rescuers. He kept his word.

The rescue was accomplished; the prisoners were hurried away, and were never after seen by English officials. The principal rescuers died for them. Several men were put on their trial for the murder of Brett. Five were found guilty; their names were Allen, Larkin, O'Brien, Condon or Shore, and Maguire. Allen was a young fellow—a mere lad under twenty. The defence was that the prisoners only meditated a rescue, and that the death of the policeman was but an accident. It should be said, also, that each of those who avowed having taken part in the rescue, denied that he had fired the fatal shot. Legally, of course, this would have availed them nothing. Shots were fired. Those who take part in an unlawful assemblage for an unlawful purpose, become responsible for the acts of their confederates. But it is worth noting as a fact that the men who gloried in the rescue, and died glorying in it, declared to the last that they had not fired the shot which killed Brett. All the five were sentenced to death. Then followed an almost unprecedented occurrence. One of the five, Maguire, had simply pleaded in his defence that he had been arrested by mistake; that he never was near the spot on the day of the rescue; that he was a loyal private in the Marines, and no Fenian; that he never knew anything about the plot or heard of it until he was arrested.

The jury convicted him along with all the others. But the reporters for the press had been so struck with the apparent genuineness of the man's defence, that they took the unprecedented step of joining in a memorial to the Government, expressing their conviction that in his case the finding of the jury was a mistake. The Government made enquiry, and it was found that Maguire's defence was a truth, and that his arrest was a mere blunder. He received a pardon at once, that being the only way in which he could be extricated from the effect of the mistaken verdict. Naturally the news of this singular miscarriage of justice threw a great doubt on the soundness of the verdict in the other cases. Many strenuous attempts were made to procure a commutation of the sentence. Mr. Bright exerted himself with characteristic energy and humanity. Mr. Swinburne, the poet, made an appeal to the people of England in lines of great power and beauty on behalf of a policy of mercy to the prisoners. Lord Derby, who had then come to be at the head of the Government, refused to listen to any appeal. He declared that it was not a political offence, but simply a murder, commonplace in everything save its peculiar atrocity. He was even ungenerous enough to declare that the act for which he had determined that the men should die was a 'dastardly' deed. This was not merely a superfluous piece of ungenerosity; it was simply a misapplication of words. A minister of the Crown might well denounce, in the strongest language that could be made appropriate to the occasion, so lawless an act as that for which Allen and his companions were condemned; but there was no excuse for calling it dastardly. The conduct of a handful of men, who stopped a police-van in a great city and at the risk of their own lives rescued some of their political heroes from custody, proclaiming at the same time their readiness to die for the deed, might be called lawless, might even be called criminal; but, if words have any meaning at all, it could not be called dastardly. We can easily test the question, if we do not maintain the creed that the moral laws change according as they are applied by different persons. Let us suppose that, instead of the rescue of two Fenians in Manchester, Lord Derby had been talking of the rescue of two Garibaldians in Rome. Let us suppose that the Papal police were carrying off two of the followers of Garibaldi to a Roman prison, and that a few Garibaldians stopped the van in open day, and within reach of the whole force of the Papal gendarmes, broke the van open and rescued the prisoners, and that in the affray one of the Papal police was killed. Does anybody suppose that Lord Derby would have stigmatised the conduct of the rescuing Garibaldians as dastardly? Is it not more likely that, even if he yielded so far to official proprieties as to call it misguided, he would have qualified his disapprobation by declaring that it was also heroic?

One other of the five prisoners who were convicted together escaped the death-sentence. This was Condon, or Shore, an American by citizenship if not by birth. He had undoubtedly been concerned in the attempt at rescue; but for some reason a distinction was made between him and the others. This act of mercy, in itself highly commendable, added to the bad effect produced in Ireland by the execution of the other three men; for it gave rise to the belief that Shore had been spared only because the protection of the American Government might have been invoked on his behalf. The other three, Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien, were executed. They all met death with courage and composure. It would be superfluous to say that their deaths did not discourage the spirit of Fenianism. On the contrary, they gave it a new lease of life.

Indeed, the execution of these men did not even tend to prevent crime. The excitement caused by the attempt they had made and the penalty they paid had hardly died away when a crime of a peculiarly atrocious nature was committed in the name of Fenianism. On November 23, 1867, Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien were hanged at Manchester. On December 13 an attempt was made to blow up the House of Detention at Clerkenwell. About four o'clock that day all London was startled by a shock and a sound resembling the distant throb of an earthquake or the blowing up of a powder-magazine. The explanation soon came. Two Fenian prisoners were in the Clerkenwell House of Detention, and some sympathisers outside had attempted to rescue them by placing a barrel of gunpowder close to the wall of the prison, and exploding the powder by means of a match and a fuse. About sixty yards of the prison wall were blown in, and numbers of small houses in the neighbourhood were shattered to pieces. Six persons were killed on the spot; about six more died from the effects of the injuries they received; some hundred and twenty persons were wounded. Forty premature confinements were the consequence of the shock received by women, and twenty of the babes died in their birth. The clumsiness of the crime was only surpassed by its atrocity. Had the prisoners on whose behalf the attempt was made been near the wall at the time, they must have shared the fate of those who were victimised outside. Had they even been taking exercise in the yard, they would, in all probability, have been killed. They would have been taking exercise at the time had it not been for a warning the authorities at Scotland Yard received two days before, to the effect that an attempt at rescue was to be made by means of gunpowder and the blowing in of the wall. In consequence of this warning the governor of the prison had the prisoners confined to their cells that day; and thus, in all probability, they owed their lives to the disclosure of the secret plan which their officious and ill-omened admirers had in

preparation for their rescue. Why the prison authorities and the police, thus forewarned, did not keep a sufficient watch upon the line of prison wall to prevent the possibility of any such scheme being put into execution, it passes the wit of man to comprehend. At the very time that this horrible crime and blunder was perpetrated, one of the London theatres was nightly crowded by spectators eager to see an Irish melodrama, among the incidents of which was the discussion of a plan for the rescue of a prisoner from a castle cell. The audience were immensely amused by the proposal of one confederate to blow up the castle altogether, and the manner in which it occurred to the simple plotters, just in time, that if they carried out this plan they must send the prisoner himself flying into air. The Clerkenwell conspirators had either not seen the popular drama or had missed the point of its broadest joke.

Five men and a woman were put on trial for the crime. The Chief Justice, before whom the charge was tried, directed the withdrawal of the proceedings against the woman and one of the men, as there seemed to be no case against them. Three others were acquitted after a long trial; one man was convicted. Unfortunately for the moral effect of the conviction, the man was found guilty on the evidence of an informer; and a very strong attempt had been made to prove that the prisoner was not in London at all at the time when he was charged with the commission of the crime. A sort of official but extra-judicial enquiry took place as to the validity of the plea of *alibi*, and the result was that the Chief Justice and the authorities at the Home Office declared themselves satisfied with the verdict. Mr. Bright raised the question in the House of Commons, and urged a further delay of the execution; but he was answered with the assurance that no doubt was any longer felt as to the propriety of the verdict. The man was executed. So far as it is possible to judge, the persons who were concerned in the plot to blow in the prison wall appear to have been of that irresponsible crew who hang on to the skirts of all secret political associations, and whose adhesion is only one other reason for regarding such associations as deplorable and baneful. Such men are of the class who bring a curse, who bring many curses, on even the best cause that strives to work in secret. They prowl after the heels of organised conspiracy, and what it will not do they are ready in some fatal moment to attempt. It would be the merest injustice to deny that among the recognised leaders of the Fenian movement were men of honourable feeling and sincere although misguided patriotism. It would be as cruel and as unjust to suppose that these men could have had any sympathy with such an outrage as that which destroyed the innocent women and children at Clerkenwell. But the political conspirator may well pause,

before entering on his schemes, to reflect that an authority exercised in secret can never be sure of making itself thoroughly felt, and of preventing some desperate follower from undertaking on his own account a deed which his leaders would never have sanctioned. If no other reason existed, this thought alone might be enough to set men's hearts against secret political confederation.

It is not necessary to follow out the steps of the Fenian movement any further. There were many isolated attempts; there were many arrests, trials, imprisonments, banishments. The effect of all this, it must be stated as a mere historical fact, was only to increase the intensity of dissatisfaction and discontent among the Irish peasantry. It is curious to notice how entirely Irish in its character the movement was, and how little sympathy it gave to or got from the movements of Continental revolution. In one or two instances some restless soldier of universal democracy found his way from the Continent to place his services at the disposal of the Fenians. The alliance was never successful. The stranger did not like the Irish; the Irish did not take to the stranger. Their ways were different. The Irish people, and more especially the Irish peasantry, failed altogether to be captivated by the prospect of the 'democratic and social republic.' They did not even understand what was meant by the vague grandeur of the phraseology which describes the supposed common cause as 'the Revolution.' Eloquence about the solidarity of peoples was lost on them. The most extreme of them only dreamed of the independence of Ireland; they had no ambition to bear a part in a general pulling down of old institutions.

The phenomena of the Fenian movement did not fail to impress some statesmanlike minds in England. There were some public men who saw that the time had come when mere repression must no longer be relied upon as a cure for Irish discontent. We know since that time that even the worst excesses of the movement impressed the mind of Mr. Gladstone with a conviction that the hour was appropriate for doing something to remove the causes of the discontent that made Ireland restless. The impatient and silly nurse tries to stop the child's crying by beating it; a more careful and intelligent person makes a prompt investigation, and finds that a pin is sticking into the little sufferer. The English Government had for a long time been the stupid nurse to the crying child. They had tried threatening words and quick blows. The cry of complaint still was heard. It occurred at last to some men of responsible authority to seek out the cause and quietly try to remove it. While many public instructors lost themselves in vain shriekings over the wickedness of Fenianism and the incurable perversity of the Irish people, one statesman

was already convinced that the very shock of the Fenian agitation would arouse public attention to the recognition of substantial grievance, and to the admission that the business of statesmanship was to seek out the remedy and provide redress.

CHAPTER LIV.

TRADES-UNIONS.

English society was much distressed and disturbed about the same time by the stories of outrages more cruel, and of a conspiracy more odious and alarming in its purpose, than any that could be ascribed to the Fenian movement. It began to be common talk that among the trades-associations there was systematic terrorising of the worst kind, and that a *Vehmgericht* more secret and more grim than any known to the middle ages was issuing its sentences in many of our great industrial communities. Ordinary intimidation had long been regarded as one of the means by which some of the trades-unions kept their principles in force. Now, however, it was common report that secret assassination was in many cases the doom of those who brought on themselves the wrath of the trades-unions. For many years the great town of Sheffield had had a special notoriety in consequence of the outrages of the kind that were believed to be committed there. When a workman had made himself obnoxious to the leaders of some local trades-union, it occasionally happened that some sudden and signal misfortune befell him. Perhaps his house was set on fire; perhaps a canister of gunpowder was exploded under his windows, or some rudely constructed infernal-machine was flung into his bedroom at midnight. The man himself, supposing him to have escaped with his life, felt convinced that in the attempt to destroy him he saw the hand of the union; his neighbours were of his opinion; but it sometimes happened, nevertheless, that there was no possibility of bringing home the charge upon evidence that could satisfy a criminal court. The comparative impunity which such crimes were enabled to secure made the perpetrators of them feel more and more safe in their enterprises; and the result was that outrages began to increase in atrocity, boldness, and numbers. The employers offered large rewards for the discovery of the offenders; the Government did the same; but not much came of the offers. The employers charged the local trades-unions with being the authors of all the crimes; the officials of the unions distinctly

and indignantly denied the charge. In some instances they did more. They offered on their own account a reward for the detection of the criminals, in order that their own innocence might thereby be established once for all in the face of day. At a public meeting held in Sheffield to express public opinion on the subject, the secretary of one of the local unions, a man named Broadhead, spoke out with indignant and vehement eloquence in denunciation of the crimes and in protest against the insinuation that they were sanctioned by the authority or done with the connivance of the trades-organisation. Most persons who read the report of the meeting were much impressed with the earnestness of Broadhead; and even among those who had no sympathy with the principles of unionism, there were not a few who were of opinion that Broadhead and his colleagues had been gravely wronged by the accusations made against them. On the other hand, it would seem that impartial persons who heard the speech made by Broadhead listened with a growing conviction that it was a little too virtuously indignant, and that it repudiated the idea of any appeal to force in maintaining the authority of the union somewhat more comprehensively than any recognition of known facts would warrant. At all events an appeal was made to the Government with apparently equal earnestness by the employers and by the union; and the Government resolved to undertake a full investigation into the whole condition of the trades-unions. A Commission was appointed, and a bill passed through Parliament enabling it to take evidence upon oath. The Commissioners sent down to Sheffield three examiners, the chief of whom was Mr. Overend, a Queen's Counsel of distinction, to make enquiry as to the outrages. The examiners had authority to offer protection to anyone, even though himself engaged in the commission of the outrages, who should give information which might lead to the discovery of the conspiracy. This offer had its full effect. The Government were now so evidently determined to get at the root of all the evil, that many of those actively engaged in the commission of the crimes took fright and believed they had best consult for their personal safety. Accordingly the Commission got as much evidence as could be desired, and it was soon put beyond dispute that more than one association had systematically employed the most atrocious means to punish offenders against their self-made laws and to deter men from venturing to act in opposition to them. The saw-grinders' union in Sheffield had been particularly active in such work, and the man named William Broadhead, who had so indignantly protested the innocence of his union, was the secretary of that organisation. Broadhead was proved to have ordered, arranged, and paid for the murder of at least one offender against his authority, and to have set on foot in the same way

various deeds scarcely if at all less criminal. The crimes were paid for out of the funds of the union. There were gradations of outrage, ascending from what might be called mere personal annoyance up to the serious destruction of property, then to personal injury, to mutilation, and to death. 'Rattening' was one of the milder forms of tyranny. The tools of obnoxious workers were destroyed; machinery was spoiled. Then the houses of the obnoxious were blown up, or cans of explosive material were flung into them at night. In one instance a woman was blinded; in another a woman was killed. Men were shot at with the object of so wounding them as to prevent them from carrying on their work; one man was shot at and killed. A ghastly account was given by one sufferer of the manner in which his house was set on fire at midnight by an explosive material flung in, and how the room and the bedcurtains flamed and blazed about him and his wife, and how he saved his wife with the utmost difficulty and at extreme risk to his own life, by tearing from her scorching body the nightdress already burning, and dropping her thus naked into the street. Broadhead himself came before the examiners and acknowledged the part he had taken in the direction of such crimes. He explained how he had devised them, organised them, selected the agents by whom they were to be committed, and paid for them out of the funds of the union. The men whom he selected had sometimes no personal resentment against the victims they were bidden to mutilate or destroy. They were ordered and paid to punish men whom Broadhead considered to be offenders against the authority and the interests of the union, and they did the work obediently. In Manchester a state of things was found to exist only less hideous than that which prevailed in Sheffield. It was among the brickmakers of Manchester that the chief offences were committed. The clay which offending brickmakers were to use was sometimes stuffed with thousands of needles, in order to pierce and maim the hands of those who unsuspectingly went to work with it. The sheds of a master who dismissed union-men were burnt with naphtha. An obnoxious man's horse was roasted to death. Many persons were shot at and wounded. Murder was done in Manchester too. Other towns were found to be not very far distant from Sheffield and Manchester in the audacity and ingenuity of their trade outrages. During the alarms caused by such revelations, many people began to cry out that the whole structure of our society was undermined, and that the 'organisation of labour' was simply a vast conspiracy to make capital, science, and energy the mere bondslaves of the trades-union and of the tyrants and serfs, knaves and dupes, who kept it up.

Society, however, does not long continue in a mood for the indulgence of mere alarm and inarticulate shrieking. Society soon began to reflect

that if it had heard terrible things, it had probably heard all the worst. The great majority of the trades-unions appeared after the most searching investigation to be absolutely free from any complicity in the crimes, or any sanction of them. Men of sense began to ask whether society had not itself to blame in some measure even for the crimes of the trades-unions. The law had always dealt unfairly and harshly with the trade-associations. Public opinion had for a long time regarded them as absolutely lawless. There was a time when their very existence would have been an infraction of the law. For centuries our legislation had acted on the principle that the working-man was a serf of society, bound to work for the sake of the employer and on the employer's terms. The famous statute of labourers, passed in the reign of Edward III., declared that every person under the age of sixty not having means to live should on being required be 'bound to serve him that doth require him,' or else be committed to gaol 'until he find surety to serve.' If a workman or a servant left his service before the time agreed upon, he was to be imprisoned. The same statute contained a section fixing the scale of wages, and declaring that no higher wages should be paid. An Act passed in the reign of Elizabeth contained provisions making the acceptance of wages compulsory, and fixing the hours and the wages of labour. A master wrongfully dismissing the servant was made liable to a fine, but a servant leaving his employment was to be imprisoned. The same principle continued to be embodied in our legislation with regard to masters and workmen, with hardly any modification, down to 1813, and indeed, to a great extent, down to 1824. Even after that time, and down to the period of which we are now writing, there was still a marked and severe distinction drawn between master and servant, master and workman, in our legislation. In cases of breach of contract the remedy against the employer was entirely civil; against the employed, criminal. A workman might even be arrested on a warrant for alleged breach of contract, and taken to prison before the case had been tried. The laws were particularly stringent in their declarations against all manner of combination among workmen. Any combined effort to raise wages would have been treated as conspiracy of a specially odious and dangerous order. Down to 1825 a mere combination of workmen for their own protection was unlawful; but long after 1825 the law continued to deal very harshly with what was called conspiracy among working-men for trade purposes. The very laws which did this were a survival of the legislation which for centuries had compelled a man to work for whomsoever chose to call on him, and either fixed his maximum of wages for him or left it to be fixed by the justices. Not many years ago it was held that, although a strike could not itself be pronounced illegal, yet a combination of workmen

to bring about a strike was a conspiracy, and was to be properly punished by law. In 1867, the very year when the Commission we have described held its enquiries at Sheffield and Manchester, a decision given by the Court of Queen's Bench affirmed that a friendly society, which was also a trades-union, had no right to the protection of the law in enforcing a claim for a debt. It was laid down that because the rules of the society appeared to be such as would operate in restraint of trade, therefore the society was not entitled to the protection of the civil law in any ordinary matter of account. The general objects of the trades-union, as distinguished from those of the friendly society, were regarded as absolutely outside the pale of legal protection. It was not merely that the trades-unions sometimes made illegal arrangements, which of course could not be recognised or enforced in any civil court. The principle was that because they, or some of them, did this sometimes, they and the whole of them, and all their transactions, were to be regarded as shut out from the protection of the civil law.

So rigidly was this principle applied to the trades-unions that they were apparently not allowed to defend themselves against plunder by a dishonest member. This extraordinary principle was in force for several years after the time at which we have now arrived in this history. For example, in 1869 an information was laid in Bradford against the secretary of a trades-association for having wilfully misappropriated a sum of money belonging to the society. The guilt of the man was clear, but the magistrates dismissed the charge, on the ground that the society was itself established for illegal purposes, that is, for the restraint of trade, and that therefore it was not entitled to the protection of the law. An appeal was made to the Court of Queen's Bench, and the decision was that the appeal must be dismissed, and that the society was established for illegal purposes. The judges were divided equally in opinion, and therefore, in accordance with the usage, the judgment was allowed to go in favour of the decision of the inferior court. The absurdity of such a principle of law is evident. It is proper that an illegal association should not be maintained in illegal acts; but it is hardly a principle of our law that because an association has been established for purposes which seem in opposition to some legal principle, its members may be plundered by anyone with impunity. A man who keeps a gambling-house is the proprietor of an unlawful establishment; but if a robber snatches his purse, he is free to claim the protection of the police, and it is not open to the thief to rest his defence simply on the plea that the man's occupation is illegal, and that his money, if left to him, would unquestionably have been applied to unlawful purposes. That illustration is, however, inadequate to express properly the injustice done to the trades-unions. It assumes that the objects of the unions were

fairly to be considered unlawful, and to be classed with the business of gaming-houses and shops for the reception of stolen goods. But in truth the main object of the trades-unions was as strictly in accordance with public policy as that of the Inns of Court or the College of Surgeons. One result of the investigations into the outrages in Sheffield and in Manchester was that public attention was drawn directly to the whole subject; the searching light of full free discussion was turned on to it, and after a while everyone began to see that the wanton injustice of the law and of society in dealing with the associations of working-men was responsible for many of the errors and even of the crimes into which some of the worst of these associations had allowed themselves to be seduced. It is as certain as any problem in mathematics can be, that when the civil law excludes any class of persons from its full protection, that class will be easily drawn into lawlessness. 'The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law,' is a reminder that barbs the advice which bids the unfriended to be not poor but break the law which denies them its protection.

It was not, however, the law alone which had set itself for centuries against the working-man. Public opinion and legislation were in complete agreement as to the rights of trades-unions. For many years the whole body of English public opinion outside the working-class itself was entirely against the principle of the unions. It is, perhaps, not possible to recall to mind any question open to controversy in which public opinion was ever in our time so nearly unanimous as it was on the subject of trades-organisations. It was an axiom among all the employing and capitalist classes that trades-organisations were as much to be condemned in point of morality as they were absurd in the sight of political economy. Country squires, who had only just been converted from the public profession of protectionist principles, and who still in their secret intelligences failed to see that they were wrong; the whole tone of whose thinking was still, when left to itself, entirely protectionist, and who, the moment they ceased to keep a strict guard on their tongues, would talk protection as naturally as they talked English—such men were lost in wonder or consumed by anger at the working-man's infatuated notions on the subject of political economy. All the leading newspapers were constantly writing against the trades-unions at one time; not writing merely as a Liberal paper writes against some Tory measure, but as men condemn a monstrous heresy. A comfortable social theory began to spring up, that all the respectable and well-conducted workmen were opposed to the unions, and all the ne'er-do-wells were on their side and in their ranks. The paid officers of the unions were described as mere cunning parasites, living on

the sap and strength of the organisation. The spokesmen of the unions were set down invariably as selfish and audacious demagogues, who incited their ignorant victims on to ruin in order that they themselves might live in comfort and revel in popular applause.

There can be no doubt that some insincere and unprincipled persons did occasionally attach themselves to the trades-organisations. Such men professed to adopt a principle in order to get money and applause. They did exactly as men do in a higher social class who profess to adopt a principle in order to get into Parliament, and then into office. But on the whole the leaders of the trades-organisations appear to have been men of sincere purpose and of good character. The officers of many of the societies worked for very small pay; for no more, in fact, than they could have got by their ordinary labour. It is also, we believe, a fact that, taken on the whole, the men in the organisations represented a much better class of workmen than those who held aloof from them. The numbers of men registered on the books of the trades-unions did not by any means represent the actual number who sympathised with unionism. Much of the business of a trades-union was simply that of an ordinary benefit society. Strikes were not always going on; the funds of the union were not often being voted to assist some mutinous brothers. By far the greater part of the occupation of a trades-union was like that of the Oddfellows or some other benefit association. A great many workingmen, a considerable proportion indeed of the working population, were members of some friendly society, and had been so perhaps from their first starting into life. Such men did not always care to give up the society to which they had been long attached, for the purpose of joining a trades-union which was usually only performing just the same functions. Therefore one mistake very commonly made by those who entered into the controversy was to count the mere numbers on the books of the trades-unions, and assume that these represented the whole strength of the movement. The numbers would have been great, and ought to have been significant, in any case; but great as they were, they by no means fairly illustrated the strength of the hold which the principle of the trades-organisation had got upon the working-classes.

That sort of public opinion of which we have already spoken, well satisfied in its mind as to most things, was for many years particularly well satisfied about strikes. We can find its views expressed in every tone. Solemn disquisition and light comedy alike gave them form. Parliament, the pulpit, the press, the stage, philosophy, fiction, all were for a long time in combination to give forth one pronouncement on the subject. A strike was something always wicked and foolish; abstractly

wicked; foolish to the fundamental depths of its theory. 'All I have to say,' a benevolent nobleman called out to a meeting of working-men, 'is—never strike!' That was his sincere advice: whatever happens, never strike; if you strike, you must be doing wrong. To engage in a strike was, according to his view, like engaging in a conspiracy to murder. Such was long the opinion of almost all above the social level of the workman himself. A strike was in their view an offence against all social laws, to be reprobated by every good man. It was not looked upon as a rough last resource to get at a decision in a controversy not otherwise to be settled, but simply as a crime. It was assumed as an axiom in political economy that a strike must be a wrong thing, because it wasted time and money, and could not in any way increase the wages fund of the country. 'The wages fund' was flung at the head of the erring artisan as a phrase to settle the whole question for him, and show him what a foolish man he was not to take any terms offered him. Undoubtedly a strike is under any circumstances the cause of the throwing away of time and money. But so too is a lawsuit. There can be no civil cause in which it would not have saved time and money if the parties could have come to a reasonable agreement among themselves, and avoided any appeal to the court. Prudent men do very often put up with a considerable loss rather than waste their time, spend their money, and sour their temper in a court of law. But it would be in vain to tell the meekest or the dullest man that he has no right to appeal to a civil court to enforce any claim. This was, however, practically the sermon which English public opinion kept preaching to the working-man for generations. He had often no way of asserting his claims effectively except by the instrumentality of a strike. A court of law could do nothing for him. If he thought his wages ought to be raised, or ought not to be lowered, a court of law could not assist him. Once it would have compelled him to take what was offered, and work for it or go to prison. Now, in better times, it would offer him no protection against the most arbitrary conduct on the part of an employer. He was admonished that he must not attempt by any combination to 'fix the price of labour.' Yet he knew very well that in many trades the masters did by association among themselves fix the price of labour. He knew that there were associations of employers which held meetings at regular periods for the purpose of agreeing among themselves as to the wages they would pay to their workmen. He failed to see why he and his fellows should not come to a common resolution as to the wages they would accept. The argument drawn from the 'wages fund' did not affect him greatly. He reasoned the matter out in a rough and ready way of his own. He saw that the employer was making a great deal of

money in the year, and that he and his fellows had very small wages. It seemed to him that the master ought to be content with a smaller amount of profit, and give his workmen a larger weekly rate of pay. That may not have been very sound political economy; but even as a thesis of political economy it was not to be got rid of by the familiar way of putting the argument about the wages fund. As regarded the right of combination, he saw that other men in other occupations did combine and did have rules of their own, and in fact trades-unions of their own. What, he asked, is the Bar but a trades-union? Is not a man prohibited from competing with his fellows by taking a rate of pay lower than the minimum fixed by the association? Is he not refused permission to practise at all if he will not conform to the rules of the lawyers' union? What is the medical profession but a trades-union? What the Stock Exchange?

In spite of law, in spite of public opinion, the trades-unions went on and prospered. Some of them grew to be great organisations, disposing of vast funds. Several fought out against employers long battles that were almost like a social civil war. Sometimes they were defeated; sometimes they were victorious; sometimes they got at least so far that each side could claim the victory, and wrangle once more historically over the point. Many individual societies were badly managed and went to pieces. Some were made the victims of swindlers, just like other institutions among other classes. Some were brought into difficulties simply because of the childlike ignorance of the most elementary principles of political economy with which they were conducted. Still the trades-union, taken as a whole, became stronger and stronger every day. It became part of the social life of the working-classes. At last it began to find public opinion giving way before it. Some eminent men, of whom Mr. Mill was the greatest, had long been endeavouring to get the world to recognise the fact that a strike is not a thing which can be called good or bad until we know its object and its history; that the men who strike may be sometimes right, and that they have sometimes been successful. But as usual in this country, and as another evidence doubtless of what is commonly called the practical character of Englishmen, the right of the trades-unions to existence and to social recognition was chiefly impressed upon the public mind by the strength of the organisation itself. The processions of the trades-unions during the Reform agitation had startled many alarmists and set many indolent minds thinking. This vast organisation had apparently sprung out of the ground. Every influence, legal, social, and political, had been against it. The press had condemned it; the pulpit had denounced it; Parliament had passed no end of laws against it; good men mourned over it; wise men shook

their heads at it; and yet there it was, stronger than ever. Many men came at once to the frankly admitted conclusion that there must be some principles, economic as well as others, to justify the existence and the growth of so remarkable an institution. The Sheffield outrages, even while they horrified everyone, yet made most persons begin to feel that the time had come when there must not be left in the mouth of the worst and most worthless member of a trades-union any excuse for saying any longer that the law was unjust to him and to his class. A course of legislation was then begun which was not made complete for several years after. We may, however, anticipate here the measures which passed in 1875, and show how at length the fair claims of the unions were recognised. The masters and workmen were placed on absolute equality as regarded the matter of contract. They had been thus equal for many years in other countries; in France, Germany, and Italy, for example. A breach of contract resulting in damages was to be treated on either side as giving rise to a civil and not a criminal remedy. There was to be no imprisonment, except as it is ordered in other cases, by a county court judge; that is, a man may be committed to prison who has been ordered to pay a certain sum, and out of contumacy will not pay it, although payment is shown to be within his power. No combination of persons is to be deemed criminal if the act proposed to be done would not be criminal when done by one person. Several breaches of contract were, however, very properly made the subject of special legislation. If, for example, a man 'wilfully and maliciously' broke his contract of service to a gas or water company, knowing that by doing so he might cause great public injury, he might be imprisoned. This is perfectly reasonable. A man employed to watch a line of railway who wilfully broke his contract of service and ran away at a time when his sudden absence might cause the destruction of a coming train, would hardly be punished adequately by a civil process and an order to pay a fine. On the other hand, it should be said that the person hiring could be imprisoned for breach of contract as well as the person hired, if his breach of contract involved serious injury, or even serious danger, to life or property. Imprisonment too might be inflicted on any person who used either violence or intimidation to compel others to act with him. It was made strictly unlawful and punishable by imprisonment to hide or injure the tools of workmen in order to prevent them from doing their work; or to 'beset' workmen in order to prevent them from getting to their place of business, or to intimidate them into keeping away from it. In principle this legislation accomplished all that any reasonable advocate of the claims of the trades-unions could have demanded. It put the masters

and the workmen on an equality. It recognised the right of combination for every purpose which is not itself actually contrary to law. It settled the fact that the right of a combination is just the same as the right of an individual. The law had long conceded to any one man the right to say for himself that he would not work for less than a certain rate of wages. It now acknowledged that a hundred or ten thousand working-men have a right to combine in the same resolution. It admitted their legal right to put this resolve into execution by way of a strike if they so think fit. The law has nothing to do with the wisdom or the folly of the act. It may be very unwise; it may be ridiculous; that is a matter for the decision of the persons concerned in it. A man may be a great fool who goes to law for some unreasonable claim, or to resist some well-sustained demand; but the law-courts are open to him all the same —if he throws away his money, that is his affair. Then, to carry the exposition a little further, an association of working-men have a perfect legal right to endeavour to persuade other working-men to adopt their views, accept their resolutions, and become members of their union. They have a right to say that anyone who does not agree to their rules shall not become or shall not remain a member of their society. Further, and finally, they have a right to say that they will not work in the same establishment with men who have acted in such a way as in their opinion to do injury to the common cause of the trade. This may seem to assert a very injurious principle: yet its justice is hardly to be disputed. Its justice never would have been disputed if the upper classes in this country, and all who follow their lead, had not got into the habit of regarding trade questions from the employers' point of view. No one would have questioned the right of an employer to dismiss a number of workmen because they belonged to a society of communists. Many persons would think him very harsh and unreasonable; but many also would hold that he was doing perfectly right; and no one would say that he was acting in excess of his strict rights as an employer. His argument would be: 'Communism is a principle directly opposed to the interests of property; I as a man of property cannot have men in my employ who are engaged in a purpose which I believe destructive to the interests of my class.' This is exactly what the trades-unions said of men who went in opposition to the union. They said: 'These men are acting in a manner highly injurious to the interests of our class; we will not work with them.' Their case is even better than that of the employer. The employer says: 'I have a right to turn these men out of my place; they shall not work for me.' The union men only said: 'We will not work with men who set themselves in opposition to the interests of the

union.' Everyone knows that there are eccentric employers here and there who make rules of various odd kinds with regard to the conditions on which they will accept the services of persons willing to work. One will not employ a Catholic; another will not employ a Unitarian; a third proscribes any young man who smokes. We have heard of a great establishment the proprietor of which would not employ, or continue to employ, any man who wore a moustache. The members of the trades-unions were of course fully aware of the existence of such arbitrary conditions imposed by employers. It naturally seemed intolerable to them to find that they were preached at in most of the newspapers, and condemned from all platforms except their own, because they asserted an independence of action for themselves in matters of far greater importance to the interests of their union and their class.

So far as this we believe their rights are now fully admitted. Beyond this no sensible man among the trades-unions themselves would think of asking that they should go. The unions have no right to coerce or intimidate anyone into agreement with them. To refuse to associate with a man is a very different thing from claiming a right to molest or frighten him. The more fully the rights of the trades-unions are acknowledged, the more energetic and fearless the law may be in preventing them from going beyond those rights. We say fearless, because law, or those who administer it, can always and only be fearless when the authority exerted is based on fairness and sound principle. The men who worked most earnestly to organise and maintain the trades-unions never could have had any wish that the organisation should act in violation of the principles of justice, civilisation, and public policy. Perhaps if the just claims and the substantial rights of the unions had been recognised long before, the world might never have been shocked by the hideous revelations of crime and outrage in Sheffield and in Manchester. No influence is more demoralising to the character of men than to feel that the laws of a country deal unjustly with them; that the laws are made by and for a class whose sympathies are not with them; and that from the protection of those laws they are blindly or purposely excluded.

The civil laws which dealt so harshly for a long time with Trades-unionism dealt unfairly too with the friendly societies, with that strong and sudden growth of our modern days—Co-operation. We call it the growth of our modern days because, although there has been a principle of co-operation in some form or other working in a more or less experimental and darkened way all through the history of civilisation, yet the shape it has assumed of recent days is strictly a growth of modern conditions. If working-men can combine effectively and in large numbers for a benefit

society or for a strike, why should they not also co-operate for the purpose of supplying each other with good and cheap food and clothing, and dividing among themselves the profits which would otherwise be distributed among various manufacturers and shopkeepers? This is a question which had often been put before, without any very decided practical result coming of it; but in 1844, or thereabouts, it was put and tested in a highly practical manner by some working-men in the north of England. North and south of England seem to be marked out by the same differences as those which distinguish north and south in most other places: the north has more of the vigorous and practical intelligence, the south more of the poetic and artistic feeling. From the sturdy north of England have always come the great political and industrial movements which specially contributed to make England what we now know her to be. In the north the co-operative movement first sprang into existence. The association called 'The Equitable Pioneers' Co-operative Store' was founded in Rochdale by a few poor flannel-weavers. The times were bad; there had been a failure of a savings-bank, involving heavy loss to many classes; and these men cast about in their minds for some way of making their little earnings go far. Most of them were, or rather had been, followers of Robert Owen, who, if he taught men to think wrongly on many subjects, taught them at least to think. These Rochdale weavers were thoughtful men, probably of the class who might have figured in the pages of 'Alton Locke.' One decidedly good teaching which they had from Robert Owen was a dislike to the credit system. They saw that the shopkeeper who gave his goods at long credit must necessarily have to charge a much higher price than the actual value of the goods, and even of a reasonable profit, in order to make up for his having to lie out of his money, and to secure himself against bad debts. They also saw that the credit system leads to almost incessant litigation; and besides that litigation means the waste of time and money, some of them, it appears, had a conscientious objection to the taking of an oath. It occurred to these Rochdale weavers, therefore, that if they could get together a little capital they might start a shop or store of their own, and thus be able to supply themselves with better goods, and at cheaper rates, than by dealing with the ordinary tradesmen. Twenty-eight of them began by subscribing twopence a week each. The number of subscribers was afterwards increased to forty, and the weekly subscription to threepence. When they had got 28*l.* they thought they had capital enough to begin their enterprise with. They took a small shop in a little back street, called Toad Lane. The name might seem a repulsive one, and perhaps ill-omened, unless indeed its omen were to be held encouraging, on the theory of the toad bearing the precious jewel in his head. But

it has to be said that 'Toad Lane' was only the Lancashire corruption of 'The Old Lane'; 'The Old' soon changing itself into 'T' Owd,' in a manner familiar to all who know Lancashire, and 'T' Owd' becoming 'Toad' by easy and rapid transmutation. After the shop had been fitted up, the equitable pioneers had only 14*l.* left to stock it; and the concern looked so small and shabby that the hearts of some of the pioneers might have well-nigh sunk within them. A neighbouring shopkeeper, feeling utter contempt for the whole enterprise, declared that he could remove the whole stock-in-trade in a wheelbarrow. The wheelbarrow-load of goods soon, however, became too heavy to be carried away in the hold of a great steamer. The pioneers began by supplying each other with groceries; they went on to butchers' meat, and then to all sorts of clothing. From supplying goods they progressed on to the manufacturing of goods; they had a corn mill and a cotton mill, and they became to a certain extent a land and building society. They set aside parts of their profits for a library and reading-room, and they founded a co-operative Turkish bath. Their capital of 28*l.* swelled in sixteen years to over 120,000*l.* Cash payments and the division of profits were the main sources of this remarkable prosperity. Much of their success in the beginning was due to the fact that they supplied good articles, and that those who bought could always rely on carrying home real value for their money. But the magic of the principle of division of profits worked wonders for them. Not merely did the shareholders share in the profits, but all the buyers received an equitable percentage on the price of every article they bought. Each purchaser, on paying for what he had bought, received a ticket which entitled him to that percentage at each division of profit, and thus many a poor man found at the quarterly division that he had several shillings, perhaps a pound, coming to him, which seemed at first to have dropped out of the clouds, so little direct claim did he appear to have on it. He had not paid more for his goods than he would have had to pay at the cheapest shop; he had got them of the best quality the price could buy; and at the end of each period he found that he had a sum of money standing to his credit, which he could either take away or leave to accumulate at the store. Many other institutions were soon following the example of the Rochdale pioneers. Long before their capital had swelled to the amount we have mentioned, the North of England was studded with co-operative associations of one kind or another. One of the very earliest founded was the Leeds Corn Mill. There were working-men's associations as well as co-operative stores. In the working associations the workers are the capitalists. They receive the regular rate of wages, and they also receive a dividend on their profits. We need not enter into further detail as

to the progress of these institutions. Many of them proved sad failures. Some started on chimerical principles; some were stupidly, some selfishly mismanaged. There came seasons of heavy strain on labour and trade, when the resources of many were taxed to their uttermost, and when some even of the best seemed for a moment likely to go under. The co-operative associations suffered in fact the trials and vicissitudes that must be met by all institutions of men. But the one result is clear and palpable; they have as a whole been a most remarkable success. Of late years the principle has been taken up by classes who would have appeared at one time to have little in common with the poor flannel-weavers of Rochdale. The civil servants of the Crown first adopted the idea; and now in some of the most fashionable quarters of London the carriages of some of their most fashionable residents are seen at the crowded doors of the co-operative store. However the co-operative principle may develop, it may safely be predicted that posterity will not let it die. It has taken firm hold of our modern society. No one now any longer dreams, as some of its more enthusiastic founders once did, that it is destined to prove a regenerator of mankind; that it is to extinguish competition, and the selfishness which keeps competition up. It is in its present stage nothing but competition in a new form. The co-operative store competes with the ordinary tradesman, who winces very keenly at the competition, and calls for even the intervention of Parliament to save him from at least one class of the competitors. But even very sanguine reformers do not often now ask that their one idea shall supersede every other; and most of the promoters of the co-operative system are well satisfied that it takes so conspicuous a place among established institutions. It seems certainly destined to develop rather than fade; to absorb rather than be absorbed. The law was much against the principle in the beginning. Before 1852 all co-operative associations had to come under the Friendly Societies Act, which prohibited their dealing with any but their own members. An Act obtained in 1852 allowed them to sell to persons not members of their body. For many years they were not permitted to hold more than an acre of land. More lately this absurd restriction was abolished, and they were allowed to trade in land, to hold land to any extent, and to act as building societies. The friendly societies, which were in their origin merely working-men's clubs, have been the subject of legislation since the later years of the last century. It may be doubted whether, even up to this day, that legislation has not done them more harm than good. The law neither takes them fairly under its protection and control, nor leaves them to do the best they can for themselves uncontrolled and on their own responsibility. At one time

the sort of left-handed recognition which the law gave them had a direct tendency to do harm. An officer was appointed by the Government, who might inspect the manner in which the accounts of the societies were kept, and certify that they were in conformity with the law; but he had no authority to look actually into the affairs of a society. His business was in fact nothing more than to certify that the legal conditions had been fully complied with, thus implying that on the face of things the accounts seemed all right. The mere fact, however, that there was any manner of Government certificate proved sadly misleading to thousands of persons. Some actually regarded the certificate as a guarantee given by the Government that their money was safe; a guarantee which bound the State to make good any loss to the depositors. Others, who were not quite so credulous, were convinced at least that the certificate testified on Government authority that the funds of the society were safe, and that its accounts and its business were managed on principles of strict economical soundness. The Government official certified nothing of the kind. A man at the head of a large establishment brings to some accountant the books of his household expenses. The accountant examines them and says, 'All these figures add up quite correctly; the accounts seem to be kept on the proper principle. If all these goods were got which I see put down here, and if all these payments were made, then your accounts are in safe condition.' But the accountant does not know whether the cook and the butler and the grooms got all the articles put down in the books, or whether the articles were all required, or whether they were paid for as stated. For all the accountant knows or professes to know, the owner of the house may be swindled by every servant and every tradesman. His affairs may be managed for him on some such principle as that of the house in which Gil Blas was once a servant, and where, from the steward down, the whole body of domestics and of tradespeople were in a conspiracy to cheat the unhappy proprietor. The certificate given to the friendly societies was of no greater value than this. Many of the societies were sadly mismanaged; in certain of them there was the grossest malversation of funds; in some towns much distress was caused among the depositors in consequence. The societies had to pass, in fact, through a stage of confusion, ignorance, and experiment, and it is perhaps only to be wondered at that there was not greater mismanagement, greater blundering, and more lamentable failure. It is not by any means certain that during these earlier stages of the growth of such institutions, the interference and even the protection of Government would have done them much good. But the indirect control which the Government for a long time undertook, had apparently no other effect than to interpose restric-

tion just where restriction was injurious, and to give a semblance of protection which was only calculated to create a false security in the minds of ignorant people and to lead to delusion and disappointment.

The Government cannot be charged of late years with any want of active interest in the business of life among the poor. Its protecting, directing hand is almost everywhere. Sometimes the help thus given is judicious and valuable. For example, the Post Office Savings Banks have become most popular institutions, and no one can doubt that they have tended to develop habits of prudence and economy among the poorer classes all over the country. One of the most curious phenomena of these later times is the reaction that has apparently taken place towards that system of paternal government which Macaulay detested, and which not long ago the Manchester School seemed in good hopes of being able to supersede by the virtue of individual action, private enterprise, voluntary benevolence. We shall still have to describe some much more remarkable illustrations of this reaction than any that have yet been given. Keeping for the present to trades' organisations, we would direct attention to the fact that whereas in old days the Government said, 'You shall do nothing to help yourselves without our control; and we will do nothing for you but to prosecute you as often as possible,' the tendency now is to say, 'You may do everything you like for yourselves, but you must allow us to enter into a benevolent rivalry with you, and insist upon doing all we can for you in our way at the same time.' Whatever the defects or the possible dangers of such a principle, if pushed too far, it is at least not likely to engender artizan conspiracy, to give excuse for secret association, to help men like Broadhead into the position of leaders and despots, to furnish weak minds with an excuse for following the instigations of the fire-raiser and the assassin. All that law has done lately to remove restriction from the 'organisation of labour,' if we may once more employ that pompous but expressive phrase, has been well done. We must not hasten to anticipate ill from the almost equally rapid movement of the tendency to help labour in doing labour's own proper work.

CHAPTER LV.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE NEW DOMINION.

On February 19, 1867, Lord Carnarvon, Secretary for the Colonies, moved the second reading of the Bill for the Confederation of the North American Provinces of the British Empire. This was in fact a measure to carry out in practical form the great principles which Lord Durham had laid down in his celebrated report. Lord Durham had done more than merely affirm the principles on which the Constitution of the Canadas should be established. He had laid the foundations of the structure. Now the time had come to raise the building to its practical completion. The bill prepared by Lord Carnarvon proposed that the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, in other words Upper and Lower Canada, along with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, should be joined in one federation, to be called the Dominion of Canada, having a central or federal Parliament, and local or state Legislatures. The central Parliament was to consist of a Senate and a House of Commons. The Senate was to be made up of seventy members nominated by the Governor-General for life, on a summons from under the Great Seal of Canada. The House of Commons was to be filled by members elected by the people of the provinces according to population, at the rate of one member for every 17,000 persons, and the duration of a Parliament was not to be more than five years. The executive was vested in the Crown, represented of course by the Governor-General. The principle on which the central Parliament was constructed appears to have been arrived at by adopting some of the ideas of England and some of those of the United States. The Senate, for example, was made to resemble as nearly as possible the system of the English House of Lords; but the representative plan applied to the House of Commons was precisely the same as that adopted in the United States. It seems almost superfluous to observe that the whole idea on which the Dominion system rests is that of the American federation. The central Parliament manages the common affairs; each province has its own local laws and legislature. There is the greatest possible variety and diversity in the local systems of the different provinces of the Dominion. The members are elected to the House of Commons on the most diverse principles of suffrage. In some of the provinces the vote is open; in others it is given by ballot, in secret.

The Act of Confederation recites that the Constitution of the Dominion

shall be similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom. But in truth the only similarity consists in the fact that one of the two chambers is nominated by the Crown, and that the authority of the Crown is represented in the Dominion by the presence of a Governor-General. In all other respects the example of the American Republic has been followed. The keystone of the whole system is that principle of federation which the United States have so long represented, and which consists of local self-government for each member of the Confederacy and the authority of a common Parliament for strictly national affairs. This fact is not an objection to the scheme. It is, on the contrary, the best security for its success. It would have been impossible to establish in Canada anything really resembling the Constitution of England. Uniformity of legislation would have been unendurable. Nothing could make the Senate of Canada an institution like the English House of Lords. Nomination by the Crown could not do it. There was some wisdom in the objection raised by Mr. Bright to this part of the scheme. A good deal of sentimentalism was talked in Parliament by the Ministers in charge of the Confederation scheme about the filial affection of Canada for the mother country, and the intense anxiety of the Canadians to make their Constitution as like as possible to that of England. The Canadians appear to have very properly thought of their own interests first of all, and they adopted the system which they believed would best suit the conditions under which they lived. In doing so they did much to strengthen and to commend that federative principle on which their Dominion is founded, and which appears likely enough to contain the ultimate solution of the whole problem of government as applied to a system made up of various populations with diverse nationalities, religions, and habitudes. So far as one may judge of the tendencies of modern times, it would seem that the inclination is to the formation of great State systems. The days of small independent States seem to be over. If this be so, it may safely be asserted that great State systems cannot be held together by uniform principles of legislation. The choice would clearly seem to be between small independent States and the principle of federation adopted in the formation of the Dominion of Canada.

The Dominion scheme only provided at first for the Confederation of the two Canadian provinces with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Provision was made, however, for the admission of any other province of British North America which should desire to follow suit. The newly constructed province of Manitoba, made up out of what had been the Hudson's Bay territories, was the first to come in. It was admitted into the union in 1870. British Columbia and Vancouver's Island followed in

1871, and Prince Edward's Island claimed admission in 1873. The Dominion now embraces the whole of the regions constituting British North America, with the exception of Newfoundland, which still prefers its lonely system of quasi-independence. It may be assumed, however, that this curious isolation will not last long; and the Act constituting the Dominion opens the door for the entrance of this latest lingerer outside whenever she may think fit to claim admission.

The idea of a federation of the provinces of British North America was not new in 1867, or even in the days of Lord Durham. When the delegates of the revolted American colonies were discussing among themselves their terms of federation, they agreed in their articles of union, that Canada 'acceding to the Confederation and joining in the measures of the United States, shall be admitted into and entitled to the advantages of the union.' No answer to this appeal was made by either of the Canadas, but the idea of union among the British provinces among themselves evidently took root then. As early as 1810 a colonist put forward a somewhat elaborate scheme for the union of the provinces. In 1814 Chief Justice Sewell, of Quebec, submitted a plan of union to the Duke of Kent. In 1827 resolutions were introduced into the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada, having relation principally to a combination of the two Canadas, but also suggesting something 'more politic, wise, and generally advantageous; viz., an union of the whole four provinces of North America under a viceroyalty, with a facsimile of that great and glorious fabric, the best monument of human wisdom, the British Constitution.' Nothing further, however, was done to advance the principle of federation until after the rebellion in Canada, and the brief dictatorship of Lord Durham. Then, as we have already said, the foundation of the system was laid. In 1849 an association, called the North American League, was formed, which held a meeting in Toronto to promote Confederation. In 1854 the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia discussed and adopted resolutions recommending the closer connection of the British provinces; and in 1857 the same province urged the question upon the consideration of Mr. Labouchere, afterwards Lord Taunton, and then Colonial Secretary. Mr. Labouchere seems to have thought that the Imperial Government had better not meddle or make in the matter, but leave it altogether for the spontaneous action of the colonists. In the following year the coalition Ministry of Canada, during the Governor-Generalship of Sir Francis Head, made a move by entering into communications with the Imperial Government and with the other American provinces. The other provinces hung back, however, and nothing came of this effort. Then Nova Scotia tried to get up a scheme of union between herself, New Brunswick, and Prince

Edward's Island. Canada offered to enter into the scheme; and in 1864 Mr. Cardwell, then Colonial Secretary, gave it his approval. New conferences were held in Quebec; but the plan was not successful. New Brunswick seems to have held back this time. It was clear, however, that the provinces were steadily moving toward an agreement, and that a basis of federation would be found before long. The maritime provinces always felt some difficulty in seeing their way to union with the Canadas. Their outlying position and their distance from the proposed seat of central government made one obvious reason for hesitation. Even at the time when the bill for the Confederation was introduced into the House of Lords, Nova Scotia was still holding back. That difficulty, however, was got over, and the Act was passed in March 1867. Lord Monck was made the first Governor-General of the new Dominion, and its first Parliament met at Ottawa in November of the same year.

In 1869—we are now somewhat anticipating—the Dominion was enlarged by the acquisition of the famous Hudson's Bay territory. When the Charter of the Hudson's Bay Company expired in 1869, Lord Granville, then Colonial Secretary, proposed that the chief part of the Company's territories should be transferred to the Dominion for 300,000*l.*; and the proposition was agreed to on both sides. The Hudson's Bay Charter dated from the reign of Charles II. The region to which it referred carries some of its history imprinted in its names. Prince Rupert was at the head of the association incorporated by the Charter into the Hudson's Bay Company. The name of Rupert's Land perpetuates his memory, as that of Prince Edward's Island will remind posterity of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, father of Queen Victoria. The Hudson's Bay Company obtained from King Charles, by virtue of the Charter in 1670, the sole and absolute government of the vast watershed of Hudson's Bay, the Rupert's Land of the Charter, on condition of paying yearly to the King and his successors 'two elks and two black beavers,' 'whensoever and as often as we, our heirs and successors, shall happen to enter into the said countries, territories, and regions.' The Hudson's Bay Company was opposed by the North West Fur Company in 1783, which fought them for a long time with Indians and law, with the tomahawk of the red man and the legal judgment of a Romilly or a Keating. In 1812 Lord Selkirk founded the Red River Company. This interloper on the battlefield was harassed by the North West Company, and it was not until 1821, when the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies—impoverished by their long warfare—amalgamated their interests, that the Red River settlers were able to reap their harvests in peace, disturbed only by occasional plagues of locusts and blackbirds. In 1835, on Lord Selkirk's death, the

Hudson's Bay Company bought the settlement from his executors. It had been under their sway before that, having been committed to their care by Lord Selkirk during his lifetime. The privilege of exclusive trading east of the Rocky Mountains was conferred by Royal licence for twenty-one years in May 1838, and some ten years later the Company received a grant of Vancouver's Island for the term of ten years from 1849 to 1859. The Hudson's Bay Company were always careful to foster the idea that their territory was chiefly wilderness, and discountenanced the reports of its fertility and fitness for colonisation which were from time to time brought to the ears of the English Government. In 1857, at the instance of Mr. Labouchere, a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to enquire into the state of the British possessions under the Company's administration. Various Government expeditions, and the publication of many Blue Books enlightened the public mind as to the real nature of those tracts of land which the council from the Fenchurch Street house declared to be so desolate. A curious illustration of the policy adopted by the Hudson's Bay Company is to be found in the contrast between the glowing descriptions of the lands under their sway given by Sir George Simpson, who was for forty years Governor of the Hudson's Bay territories, in his 'Overland Journey Round the World,' and his evidence given before the Select Committee of the House of Commons. The Company exerted itself strenuously to defend its interests. The influence of Mr. Edward Ellice, who was at once a director of the Company, a member of the Committee, and a witness, did much to guide the Committee's decision. An amendment of Mr. Gladstone to their unsatisfactory report, urging that all lands capable of colonisation be withdrawn from the Company, and only land incapable of being so treated left to them, was negatived by the casting vote of the chairman. During the sittings of the Committee there was cited in evidence a petition from 575 Red River settlers to the Legislative Assembly of Canada demanding British protection. This appeal was a proceeding curiously at variance with the later action of the settlement. When in 1869 the chief part of the territories was transferred to Canada, on the proposition of Earl Granville, the Red River country rose in rebellion, and refused to receive the new Governor. Louis Riel, the insurgent chief, seized on Fort Garry and the Company's treasury, and proclaimed the independence of the settlement. Sir Garnet, then Colonel, Wolseley, was sent in command of an expedition which reached Fort Garry on August 23, when the insurgents submitted without resistance, and the district received the name of Manitoba.

Thus the Dominion of Canada now stretches from ocean to ocean. The

population of British North America did not exceed one million and a half in 1841, at the time of the granting of the Constitution, and it is now over four millions. The revenue of the provinces has multiplied more than twentyfold during the same time. Canada has everything that ought to make a commonwealth great and prosperous. The fisheries of her maritime provinces, the coal and iron of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, the grain-producing regions of the North-West, the superb St. Lawrence, hardly rivalled on the globe as a channel of commerce from the interior of a country to the ocean—all these are guarantees of a great future. Not unnaturally many in and out of Canada speculate as to the form that future will show. Canada sprang into prosperity when she was allowed to do the work of her political development for herself; the question is, will she never demand a more absolute self-government? Will she be captivated by the charms of a distinct national existence? For some years a feeling was spreading in England which began to find expression in repeated and very distinct suggestions that the Canadians had better begin to think of looking out for themselves. Many Englishmen complained of this country being expected to undertake the principal cost of the defences of Canada, and to guarantee her railway schemes, especially when the commercial policy which Canada adopted towards England was one of a strictly protective character. Shall we have to fight the battles of Canada, it was asked; shall we have to become responsible for her railway enterprises; and is Canada not even to give us an open market for our manufactures? On the other hand, some Canadians might well have asked whether Canada was to be always left open as a possible battle-ground on which England's quarrels were to be fought out. If the *Alabama* dispute had led to war, the United States would have invaded Canada. The colonists, who had had nothing to do with the cause of quarrel, would have seen their homesteads exposed to all the dangers and the terrors of invasion. It was natural that such considerations should have their influence on both sides. But, as often happens in our political life, the advocates of the policy which would urge the colonists into independence went just so far as to bring about a reaction. Then for a while nothing was heard here but the protestations of statesmen that the connection with the Canadas and with all the colonies was the one thing for which they lived. This outcry bore down all others for a time, and the hints as to independence were heard no more. The movement that way had evidently been premature. Indeed, it not only came prematurely, but it came from the wrong side. It ought not to be part of the policy of the mother country to prompt and goad the colonies into independence. If the demand is ever made it ought to be the spontaneous suggestion of the colonies

themselves. The question will be settled by the interests of Canada itself when the time for decision comes. Mere protestations of kinship and loyalty and so forth will not count for much in the final settlement. A Canadian official, Mr. J. G. Bourinot, of Ottawa, has argued with much force that there are three destinies open to Canada, one of which she will have some time or other to choose. These are, annexation to the United States, complete independence, and what he calls 'consolidation into the empire.' For the present at least there cannot be said to be anywhere in Canada a party in favour of annexation to the United States. Such a change is undoubtedly one of the possibilities; and we agree with Mr. Bourinot in thinking it more probable than that the connection with England should always endure on its present conditions. But the question of annexation, which once was a practical and positive reality in Canadian politics, has been losing its vitality steadily ever since the mission of Lord Durham; and just now can hardly be called a living question at all. Independence is sure to become some time or other a demand among Canadians. It is hardly possible to believe that the Dominion should long go on without seeing the rise of a political party whose watchword will be a cry for complete national independence. The Dominion has already a practical independence. Except for the fact that she receives the Governor-General whom the Sovereign sends out, Canada is as completely mistress of her own destinies as though she were an independent republic. She frames her own tariffs to suit her own interests, and she may even, if she pleases, as Mr. Bourinot says, fix the expenses of her militia and her defences solely with regard to Canadian inclinations. Every year, every event, only makes it more clear that she is virtually independent.

The Letellier controversy, to go forward a few years, is an illustration of this fact. In March 1878, M. Luc Letellier, the Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec, quarrelled with his Cabinet, and dismissed the Premier, M. C. B. de Boucherville, and his ministry, alleging, as justification for his act, that the Government was in the habit of passing various measures without his knowledge, and of generally neglecting to consult with him. He then placed M. Joly in office, though M. Joly's ministry were unable to command a majority in the House. A petition was thereupon addressed to the Governor in Council, praying for M. Letellier's dismissal. Lord Lorne's ministers advised him to accede to the petition. Lord Lorne objected, on the ground that though a Governor-General appointed a Lieutenant-Governor on the advice of his ministers, the removal of the Lieutenant-Governor was a matter for his own personal decision. This point of view seemed to be authorised by the words of the Dominion Act; but an appeal from Lord Lorne to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the

Colonial Secretary, received a reply counselling the Governor-General to give way to his ministers. Thus the Imperial Government withdrew from the representative of the Crown all but the merest semblance of authority, and made him—what indeed he should be, but certainly was not intended to be at the time when the Confederation was formed—the figure-head of the Dominion, the mouth-piece for the utterances of the Canadian legislature. Acting upon the advice of the Colonial Secretary, Lord Lorne gave way, M. Luc Letellier was removed, and with him went the last pretension of England to rule her North American colonies.

Still, there is a vast difference between the charm of a complete and that of a merely virtual independence. The time might come when Canada would feel ambitious of a career and a history all her own. In a merely practical point of view she might object to the dangerous fellowship of a country which is liable to be engaged in wars with states whose fleets might harass Canadian seaports; or whose armies, in at least one case, might cross the Canadian frontier line. The very reasonable policy which might induce England some time to say that the Canadians must defend themselves, might well seem to the Canadians to be appropriately followed up by a declaration on the part of the Dominion, that if she must defend herself, she must be free from responsibility for the foreign policy of England. Independence, therefore, is a possibility of the future, although it has not yet come to be a question in practical politics. But then there is the third possibility to which Mr. Bourinot refers—that of 'consolidation into the empire.' Canada might become one member of a great English federation, and in that way have a voice in directing the foreign policy of England, while admitting English opinion to a voice in the construction of Canadian tariffs. This question concerns the destinies of most other colonies of Great Britain; of all her colonies in time. What is to come of Australia? That colony has no United States near at hand to suggest a possibility of annexation; and her choice is apparently limited to the alternative of independence or 'consolidation into the empire.' Independence is surely in this case a natural and a possible solution. Australia is well suited by her geographical position and the circumstances of her political growth to form, if it were necessary, a confederation of her own. Australia now consists of five separate colonies—New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia, and Queensland; all these are provinces of one vast island, the largest island in the world. We leave New Zealand and even Tasmania out of consideration for the moment. Tasmania, and even New Zealand, might naturally enough form part of an Australian confederation, and should of necessity form part of such a confederation

were it Australasian. For the present, however, we prefer to speak of the colonies which are bound together within the shore-lines of the one great island. All these colonies have now representative government, with responsible ministries, and parliamentary chambers. New South Wales is the oldest of the group. Its political life may be said to date from 1853, when it first received what is fairly to be called a constitution. For ten years previously it had possessed a sort of legislature, consisting of a single Chamber, of which half the members were nominee, and the other half elected. One of the most distinguished members of that Chamber for many years was Mr. Lowe, who appears to have learned to hate democratic government from watching over its earliest infancy, as some women imbibe a dislike to all children from having had to do too much nursery-work in their girlhood. Victoria, which was separated from New South Wales in 1851, got her liberal constitution in 1856. The other colonies followed by degrees. The constitutional systems differ among themselves as to certain of their details. The electoral qualification, for example, differs considerably. Generally speaking, however, they may be set down as all alike illustrating the principles and exercising the influence of representative government. They are training schools for the work of complete independence, if ever it should suit the interests of the Colonies to start absolutely for themselves. They have not got on so far without much confusion and many sad mistakes. The constitutional controversies and difficulties in Victoria and in other Australian colonies are a favourite example with some writers and speakers, to show the failure of the democratic principle in government. But it is always forgotten that the principle of representative government in a colony like Victoria is, as a matter of necessity, that of democracy. Even those who believe the aristocratic influence invaluable in the life of a nation must see that New South Wales and Victoria and Queensland must somehow contrive to do without such an influence. An aristocracy cannot be imported; nor can it be sown in the evening to grow up next morning. The colonists are compelled to construct a system without it. There are many difficulties in their way. It is often carelessly said that they ought to find the work easy enough, because they have the example and the experience of England to guide them. But they have no such guide. The conditions under which the colonies have to create a constitutional system are entirely different from those of England; so different, indeed, that there must be a certain danger of going astray simply from trying to follow England's example under circumstances entirely unlike those of England.

Despite all confusion or blundering, however, it is clear that the

Australian colonies are growing and prospering, and that their gradual training in the business of political government will soon bring each of them to the principles and the mechanism best suited for its condition and its development. All the lessons lately taught by the Home Government have been, and very properly, that they must manage their affairs and compose their domestic quarrels without the intervention of Imperial authority. This has been impressed upon them just as earnestly by Conservative as by Liberal Secretaries of State. The Victorian deadlock, as it was called, is a recent example. It began with a dispute between the two Chambers as to the payment of members. The majority in the Legislative Assembly, or House of Commons, passed as usual the estimate for the payment of members, the system of paying the members having prevailed since 1872. It was thrown out by the Legislative Council, or Senate. The Chief Secretary—or, as we should call him, the Prime Minister—of the colony, Mr. Graham Berry, added the amount to the Appropriation Bill. The Legislative Council refused to pass the Bill. The ministry retorted by dismissing or threatening to dismiss a whole army of Government officials—county court judges, magistrates, coroners, and other functionaries—on the ground that they had not the money to pay their salaries. Constitutional government seemed for the moment to have really come to a deadlock. Both Chambers eagerly appealed to the Governor. The Governor, acting on the advice of the Colonial Office, preserved a strict neutrality. The money question was temporarily settled by a sort of compromise; but the popular Assembly at once set to work, with the assistance of the Colonial Ministry, to diminish the power of the Upper Chamber. They adopted a measure for that purpose; but the question was how to get the Upper Chamber to pass it. Mr. Berry came to England to endeavour to prevail upon the Government here to effect a change in the Victorian Constitution by an Imperial decree. The Conservative Secretary of State, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, firmly refused to interfere. Only in the very last extremity, it was authoritatively declared, could the mother country interfere in the domestic disputes of a colony having parliamentary institutions and a responsible ministry. This was an important declaration, and it announced a just and wise resolve. The training given by self-government would be of little value or substance indeed if the mother country were to undertake to intervene whenever anything went wrong, and on her own authority try to set it right. The Australian colonies have therefore, like the dominion of Canada, a virtual independence. They have the right of complete self-government. Only the name of a distinct nationality is wanting. As in the case of the Dominion of Canada, so

too in that of Australia, it is quite possible that the colonists may some time feel inspired by the longing for a national independence. In such a condition of things the geographical situation of Australia would make the experiment seem even more natural than that of Canada. Australia, girt by her oceans, and with the Tasmanian and New Zealand islands for associates, would form a natural federation apart: a federation quite capable of living for itself, and of having in the future a distinct nationality, and perhaps a great history.

But Australia, or Australasia, would also be well fitted to take her part in that wider and grander federation which is already the dream and the faith of many colonists and some Englishmen. This is the third choice which Mr. Bourinot contemplates as offered to the colonies and to England. Why, it is asked, should there not be a great Confederation of England, of Ireland, and of the states that are now colonies? Why should there not be an Imperial Parliament, then truly Imperial, in which each of these separate provinces or states should be represented for common purposes, while each had separately its local legislature to arrange its own domestic affairs? Why should Canada, should Victoria, should Cape Colony, or Natal, or New Zealand, be left absolutely without a voice in the decision of those important questions of foreign policy, of peace and war, which may have such momentous results for any one of those provinces? A war with the United States would undoubtedly bring on an invasion of Canada. The Crimean war seemed at one time destined to invite a Russian raid upon some of the Australian colonies. Why should colonies like these be allowed no share in deciding the policy which may possibly come to its most momentous issue on their own soil? If the colonies are never to have that voice in Imperial affairs, is it likely that they will long continue merely to hang on to the skirts of England? Then, again, one great difficulty between England and her colonies is caused by the different views which they take on questions of tariff and taxation. Canada, for example, enforces against Great Britain the severest protective system. English politicians and manufacturers chafe so much at this that it seems likely to be the cause at one time or other of a quarrel which no fine phrases on either side can conjure away. An English statesman of the present day has said that as we lost some of our American colonies because we insisted upon taxing them, we may lose the others because we will not permit them to tax us. Might not this difficulty, too, be removed from the path of the future if colonists and inhabitants of the mother country alike sat in the one Imperial legislature, and discussed in common their great common interests? Is not some such principle, indeed, the probable solution of the

problem of government for systems made up of various and widely separated provinces and nationalities? Here, too, would be a framework always wide enough for the reception of new creations. The process which in the American Republic converts first a desert into a territory, and then a territory into a state, would admit new province after new province into this great federated system. Who shall say that even the future relations of the peoples of Hindostan might not be satisfactorily provided for by such a principle of federation? Immense, no doubt, are the difficulties that lie in the way of such a scheme. To many minds it will seem that only the merest dreamers could entertain the idea. But the so-called dreamers would, perhaps, have something to say for the practicable nature of their plan. They might at least retort upon their critics by asking, 'What then have you, who call yourselves practical men and despise the dreamers of dreams—what have you to suggest? Do you really believe that things can always go on as they are going now? You have eyes; open them and look beyond your own parish, your own club, coterie, or village, and say whether you think it possible that great colonies like those of British North America and those of Australasia are likely to remain always content with their present anomalous condition, or that your own people would remain for ever content with it even if the colonists were never to complain? What then do you expect? Annexation to America in the one case; independence in the other, or perhaps independence in both, and in all? To that result, if it must come to that, the mind of England would have to reconcile herself. She has no Imperial privilege to interfere with the destinies of the world. But in the meantime would it not be the part of you, the practical men, to consider whether that other suggestion is not more desirable as well as more easy to realise; that scheme of a great federation which should reconcile the several interests and the individual energies of the colonies with the central policy of a great free empire?'

CHAPTER LVI.

'BEGINS WITH SOLDAN, ENDS WITH PRESTER JOHN.'

In the summer of 1867 England received with strange welcome a strange visitor. 'Quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes?' Looking forward into the future we may indeed apply yet other words of Dido, and say of the new comer to these shores, 'Quibus ille jactatus fatis!' It was the Sultan of Turkey who came to visit England—the Sultan Abdul-Aziz,

whose career was to end ten years after in dethronement and suicide. Abdul-Aziz was the first Sultan who ever set his foot on English soil. He was welcomed with a show of enthusiasm which made cool observers wonder and shrug their shoulders. The Cretan insurrection was going on, and the Sultan's generals were doing cruel work among the unfortunate rebels of that Greek race with which the people of England had so long and so loudly professed the deepest sympathy. Yet the Sultan was received by Englishmen with what must have seemed to him a genuine outburst of national enthusiasm. As a matter of course he received the usual Court entertainments; but he was also entertained gorgeously by the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London; he went in state to the Opera and the Crystal Palace; he saw a review of the fleet, in company with the Queen, at Spithead; he was run after and shouted for by vast crowds wherever he showed his dark and melancholy face, on which even then the sullen shadow of the future might seem to have been cast. His presence threw completely into the background that of his nominal vassal the Viceroy of Egypt, who might otherwise have been a very sufficient lion in himself. Abdul-Aziz doubtless believed in the genuineness of the reception, and thought it denoted a real and a lasting sympathy with him and his State. He did not know how easily crowds are gathered and the fire of popular enthusiasm is lighted in London. The Shah of Persia was to experience the same sort of reception not long after; Garibaldi had enjoyed it not long before; Kossuth had had it in his time. Some of the newspapers politely professed to believe that the visit would be productive of wonderful results to Turkey. The Sultan, it was suggested, would surely return to Constantinople with his head full of new ideas gathered up in the West. He would go back much impressed by the evidences of the blessings of our constitutional government, and the progressive nature of our civic institutions. He would read a lesson in the glass and iron of the Crystal Palace, the solid splendours of the Guildhall. He would learn something from the directors of the railway companies, and something from the Lord Mayor. The Cattle Show at the Agricultural Hall could not be lost on his observant eyes. The result would be a new era for Turkey—another new era: the real new era this time. The poor Sultan's head must have been sadly bemused by all the various sights he was forced to see. He left England just before the public had had time to get tired of him; and the new era did not appear to be any nearer for Turkey after his return home.

Mr. Disraeli astonished and amused the public towards the close of 1867 by a declaration he made at a dinner which was given in his honour at Edinburgh. The company were surprised to learn that he had for many

years been a thorough reformer and an advocate of popular suffrage, and that he had only kept his convictions to himself because it was necessary to instil them gently into the minds of his political colleagues. 'I had,' he said, 'to prepare the mind of the country, and to educate—if it be not arrogant to use such a phrase—to educate our party. It is a large party, and requires its attention to be called to questions of this kind with some pressure. I had to prepare the mind of Parliament and the country on this question of Reform.' All the time, therefore, that Mr. Disraeli was fighting against Reform Bills, he was really trying to lead his party 'with a gentle hand, thither, oh, thither,' towards the principles of popular reform. This then, people said, is what Vivian Grey meant when he declared that for statesmen who would rule, 'our wisdom must be concealed under folly, and our constancy under caprice.' Some members of the party which Mr. Disraeli professed to have thus cleverly educated, were a little scandalised and even shocked at the frank composure of his confession; some were offended; it seemed to them that their ingenious instructor had made fools of them. But the general public, as usual, persisted in refusing to take Mr. Disraeli seriously, or to fasten on him any moral responsibility for anything he might say or do. It might have been wrong in another statesman to put on for years the profession of Conservatism in order that he might get more deeply into the confidence of Conservatives and instil into them the principles of Mr. Bright. But in Mr. Disraeli it was of no consequence; that was his way; if he were anything but that he would not be Mr. Disraeli; he would not be leader of the House of Commons; he would not be Prime Minister of England.

For to that it soon came; came at last. 'At this moment how many a powerful noble wants only wit to be a minister; and what wants Vivian Grey to attain the same end?' What Vivian Grey once wanted to attain that end he had long since compassed. Only the opportunity was lately needed to make him Prime Minister; and that opportunity came early in 1868. Lord Derby's health had for some time been so weakly that he was anxious to get rid of the trouble of office as soon as possible. In February 1868 he became so ill that his condition excited the gravest anxiety. He rallied indeed and grew much better; but he took the warning and determined on retiring from office. He tendered his resignation, and it was accepted by the Queen. It fell to the lot of his son, Lord Stanley, to make the announcement in the House of Commons. There was a general regret felt for the retirement of Lord Derby from a leading place in politics; but as soon as it appeared that his physical condition was not actually hopeless, men's minds turned at once from him to his successor. No one could now doubt that Mr. Disraeli's time had come. The patient career, the

thirty years' war against difficulties, were to have their long-desired reward. The Queen sent for Mr. Disraeli, and invited him to assume Lord Derby's vacated place and to form a Government. By a curious coincidence the autograph letter containing this invitation was brought from Osborne to the new Prime Minister by General Grey, the man who defeated Mr. Disraeli in his first endeavour to enter the House of Commons. That was the contest for Wycombe in June 1832. It was a memorable contest in many ways. It was the last election under the political conditions which the Reform Bill brought to a close. The Reform Bill had only just been passed when the Wycombe election took place, and had not come into actual operation. The state of the poll is amusing to read of now. Thirty-five voters all told registered their suffrages. Twenty-three voted for Colonel Grey as he then was; twelve were induced to support Mr. Disraeli. Then Mr. Disraeli retired from the contest, and Colonel Grey was proclaimed the representative of Wycombe by a majority of eleven. Nor had Wycombe exhausted in the contest all its electoral strength. There were, it seemed, two voters more in the borough who would have polled, if it were necessary, on the side of Colonel Grey. Mr. Disraeli's successful rival in that first struggle for a seat in Parliament was now the bearer of the Queen's invitation to Mr. Disraeli to become Prime Minister of England. The public in general were well pleased that Mr. Disraeli should reach the object of his ambition. It seemed only the fit return for his long and hard struggle against so many adverse conditions. He had battled with his evil stars; and his triumph over them pleased most of those who had observed the contest. Mr. Frank H. Hill, in that remarkable book, unrivalled in its way, which bears the modest name of 'Political Portraits,' speaks of Mr. Disraeli's curiously isolated position in the House of Commons. 'He sits like a solitary gladiator waiting the signal for combat.' The sentence is admirable as a description. Nothing could be happier as a comparison. For the very reason that Mr. Disraeli had always been like the solitary gladiator the public were all the more pleased when his long, lonely struggle 'for his own hand' carried off the prize at last. The public never looked on Mr. Disraeli, up to this period of his career at least, as anything but a brilliant gladiator. The author of 'Political Portraits' observes, that 'Mr. Disraeli's Premiership is remarkable chiefly for the fact that he was Prime Minister.' This too was true. It is a correct description of that short season of rule which came to Mr. Disraeli on the retirement of Lord Derby. But if Mr. Hill were to take up the subject now, he would probably admit that Mr. Disraeli's second Premiership was remarkable for a good many other things besides the fact that he was a second time Prime Minister.

The new Premier made few changes in his Cabinet. His former lieutenant, Lord Cairns, had been for some time one of the Lords Justices of the Court of Chancery. Mr. Disraeli made him Lord Chancellor. In order to do this he had to undertake the somewhat ungracious task of informing Lord Chelmsford, who sat on the woolsack during Lord Derby's tenure of office, that his services would no longer be required. Lord Chelmsford's friends were very angry, and a painful controversy began in the newspapers. It was plainly stated by some of the aggrieved that Lord Chelmsford had been put aside because he had shown himself too firmly independent in his selection of judges. But there seems no reason to ascribe Mr. Disraeli's action to any other than its obvious and reasonable motive. His Ministry was singularly weak in debating talent in the House of Lords. Lord Cairns was one of the best Parliamentary debaters of the day; Lord Chelmsford was hardly entitled to be called a Parliamentary debater at all. Lord Cairns was a really great lawyer; Lord Chelmsford was only a lawyer of respectable capacity. Lord Chelmsford was at that time nearly seventy-five years old, and Lord Cairns was a quarter of a century younger. It is surely not necessary to search for ungenerous or improper motives to explain the act of the new Prime Minister in preferring the one man to the other. Mr. Disraeli merely did his duty. Nothing could justify a Minister who had the opportunity and the responsibility of such a choice in deciding to retain Lord Chelmsford rather than to bring in Lord Cairns.

No other change was important. Mr. Ward Hunt, a respectable country gentleman of no great position and of moderate abilities, became Chancellor of the Exchequer in the room of Mr. Disraeli. Mr. Walpole, who had been in the Cabinet for some time without office, retired from the Administration altogether. A good deal of work was got through in the session. A bill was introduced to put a stop to the system of public executions, and passed with little difficulty. The only objection raised was urged by those who thought the time had come for abolishing the system of capital punishment altogether. Public executions had long grown to be a scandal to the country. Every voice had been crying out against them. The author of the 'Ingoldsby Legends' had made a public execution the subject of a bitter and painful satire. Dickens had denounced the system with generous vehemence; Thackeray had borne stern testimony to its abominations. A public execution in London was a scene to fill an observer with something like a loathing for the whole human race. Through all the long night before the execution the precincts of the prison became a bivouac ground for the ruffianism of the metropolis. The roughs, the harlots, the professional robbers, and the

prospective murderers held high festival there. The air reeked with the smell of strong drink, with filthy jokes and oaths and blasphemy. The soul took its flight as if it were a trapeze-performer in a circus. The moral effect of the scene, as an example to evil-doers, was about as great as the moral effect of a cock-fight. The demoralising effect, however, was broad and deep. It may be doubted whether one in ten thousand of those who for mere curiosity came to see an execution did not go away a worse creature than he had come. As the old-fashioned intramural burial-ground made by its own vapours new corpses to fill it, so the atmosphere of the public execution generated fresh criminals to exhibit on the scaffold. Posterity will probably wonder how the age which would have scouted the idea of any wholesome effect being wrought by public floggings, could have remained so long under the belief that any manner of good could be done by the system of public executions. Since the change made in 1868, the execution takes place within the precincts of the gaol; it is witnessed by a few selected persons, usually including representatives of the press, and it is certified by the verdict of a coroner's jury.

Another change of ancient system was made by the measure which took away from the House of Commons the power of deciding election petitions. The long-established custom was, that an election petition was referred to a Committee of the House of Commons, who heard the evidence on both sides, and then decided by majority of votes as to the right of the person elected to hold the seat. The system was open to some obvious objections. The one great and crying evil of our electioneering was then the bribery and corruption which attended it. A Parliamentary Committee could hardly be expected to deal very stringently with bribery, seeing that most of the members of the Committee were sure to have carried on or authorised bribery on their own account. A false public conscience had grown up with regard to bribery. Few men held it really in hatred. The country gentleman whose own vote, when once he had been elected, was unpurchasable by any money bribe, thought it quite a natural and legitimate thing that he should buy his seat by corrupting voters. As in a former age no gentleman thought it wrong to seduce a woman, so in a very recent day no man with money thought it improper to spend some of his money in corrupting electors. What censure was it likely a country squire would have got fifty years ago if accused before a council of squires of having seduced some tenant's wife or daughter? Just so much would a rich man have got twenty years ago from a Parliamentary Committee if it were proved that he had allowed his agent to lay out money ingeniously for him in bribes. Then again, the

decision of the Parliamentary Committee was very often determined by the political opinions of the majority of its members. Acute persons used to say, that when once the Committee had been formed they could tell what its decision would be. 'Show me the men and I'll show you the decision,' was the principle. It was not always found to be so in practice. A Committee with a Conservative majority did sometimes decide against a Conservative candidate. A Committee with a majority of Whigs has been known to unseat a Whig occupant. But in general the decision of the Committee was either influenced by the political opinions of its majority, or, what was nearly as bad so far as public influence was concerned, it was believed to be so influenced. There had therefore been for a long time an opinion growing up that something must be done to bring about a reform, and in 1867 a Parliamentary Select Committee reported in favour of abandoning altogether the system of referring election petitions to a tribunal composed of members of the House of Commons. The proposal of this Committee was, that every petition should be referred to one of the Judges of the superior courts at Westminster, with power to decide both law and fact, and to report not only as to the seat but as to the extent of bribery and corruption in the constituency. The Judges themselves strongly objected to having such duties imposed upon them. The Lord Chief Justice stated on their behalf that he had consulted with them, and was charged by them one and all to convey to the Lord Chancellor 'their strong and unanimous feeling of insuperable objection to undertaking functions the effect of which would be to lower and degrade the judicial office, and to destroy, or at all events materially impair, the confidence of the public in the thorough impartiality and inflexible integrity of the Judges, when in the course of their ordinary duties political matters come incidentally before them.' Notwithstanding the objections of the Judges, however, the Government, after having made one or two unsuccessful experiments at a measure to institute a new court for the trial of election petitions, brought in a bill to refer such petitions to a single Judge, selected from a list to be made by arrangement among the Judges of the three superior courts. This bill, which was to be in operation for three years as an experiment, was carried without much difficulty. It has been renewed since that time, and slightly altered. The principle of referring election petitions to the decision of a legal tribunal remains in force, and it is very unlikely indeed that the House of Commons will ever recover its ancient privilege. Many members of that House still regret the change. They say, and not unreasonably, that with time and the purifying effect of public opinion the objections to the old system would have died away. A Committee of the House of Commons

would have come to regard bribery as all honest and decent men must in time regard it. They would acknowledge it a crime and brand it accordingly. So too it is surely probable that members of the House of Commons sitting to hear an election petition would have got over that low condition of political morals which allowed them to give or be suspected of giving their decision for partisan purposes without regard to facts and to justice. On the other hand, it seems a strange anomaly that a Judge may not only declare the candidate of the majority disentitled to a seat, but declare the candidate of the minority entitled to it. In one celebrated case of an Irish election the candidate elected by an overwhelming majority was unseated by the decision of the Judge; the candidate who had a very small minority of votes in his favour was installed in the seat. It was obviously absurd to call such a man the representative of the constituency. It is right to say that none of the effects anticipated by the Chief Justice were felt in England. The impartiality of the Judges was never called in question. In Ireland it was otherwise, at least in some instances. Judges are rarely appointed in Ireland who have not held law office; and law office is usually obtained by Parliamentary, in other words, by partisan service. There is not therefore always the same confidence in the impartiality of the Judges in Ireland that prevails in England, and it must be owned that in one or two instances at least, the effect of referring an election petition to the decision of an Irish Judge was not by any means favourable to the public faith either in the dignity or the impartiality of the Bench. Of late years some really stringent measures have been taken against bribery. Several boroughs have been disfranchised altogether because of the gross and seemingly ineradicable corruption that prevailed there. Time, education, and public opinion will probably before long cleanse our political system of the stain of bribery. Before long surely it will be accounted as base to give as to take a bribe.

The House of Lords too abandoned about this time one of their ancient usages; the custom of voting by proxy. A Select Committee of the Peers had recommended that the practice should be discontinued. It was defended of course, as every antiquated and anomalous practice is sure to be defended. It was urged, for example, that no men can be better qualified to understand the great political questions of the day than members of the House of Peers who are employed in the diplomatic service abroad, and that it is unfair to exclude these men from affirming their opinion by a vote, even though they cannot quit their posts and return home to give the vote in person. This small grievance, if it were one, was very properly held to be of little account when compared with the obvious

objections to the practice. The House of Lords, however, were not willing absolutely and for ever to give up the privilege. They only passed a standing order 'that the practice of calling for proxies on a division be discontinued, and that two days' notice be given of any motion for the suspension of the order.' It is not likely that any attempt will be made to suspend the order and renew the obsolete practice.

The Government ventured this year on the bold but judicious step of acquiring possession of all the lines of telegraph, and making the control of communication by wire a part of the business of the Post Office. They did not succeed in making a very good bargain of it, and for a time the new management resulted in the most distracting confusion. But the country highly approved of the purchase. The Post Office has long been one of the best managed departments of the Civil Service.

An important event in the year's history was the successful conclusion of the expedition into Abyssinia. We have already mentioned that much alarm had long been felt in the country with regard to the fate of a number of British subjects, men and women, who were held in captivity by Theodore King of Abyssinia. A vague mysterious interest hung around Abyssinia. It is a land which claims to have held the primitive Christians, and to have the bones of Saint Mark among its treasury of sacred relics. It held fast to the Christian faith, according to its own views of that faith, when Egypt flung it aside after the Arab invasion. The Abyssinians trace the origin of their empire back to the time of Solomon when the Queen of Sheba visited him. The Emperor or King of Abyssinia was the Prester John, the mysterious king-priest of the middle ages. If Sir John Mandeville may be accepted as any authority, that traveller avers that the title of Prester John rose from the fact that one of the early kings of Abyssinia went with a Christian knight into a Christian church in Egypt, and was so charmed with the service that he vowed he would thenceforth take the title of priest. He further declared, that 'he wolde have the name of the first preest that wente out of the Chirche; and his name was John.' A traveller whom not a few were disposed to class with Sir John Mandeville, brought back to Europe in a later day some marvellous tales of the Abyssinians. An advertisement prefixed to the third volume of Buffon's 'History of Birds' acknowledges 'the free and generous communication which I had of the drawings and observations of Mr. James Bruce, who, returning from Numidia and the interior parts of Abyssinia, stayed in my house for several days, and made me a partaker of the knowledge which he had acquired in a tour no less fatiguing than hazardous.' The publication of Bruce's 'Travels in Abyssinia,' excited an interest which was further inflamed by the fierce controversy as to the accuracy

of his statements and descriptions. Some at least of Bruce's most disputed assertions have been confirmed since his day by the observations of other travellers. The curiosity as to the land of Prester John was revived for modern times by Bruce and the controversy Bruce called up, and in addition to the public anxiety on account of the English prisoners, there was in England a certain vague expectation of marvellous results to come of a military expedition into the land of ancient mystery. Among the captives in Theodore's hands were Captain Cameron, her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, with his secretary and some servants; Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, a Syrian Christian and naturalised subject of the Queen; Lieutenant Prideaux, and Dr. Blanc. These men were made prisoners while actually engaged on official business of the English Government, and the expedition was therefore formally charged to recover them. But there were several other captives as well, whom the Commander-in-Chief was enjoined to take under his protection. There were German missionaries and their wives and children, some of the women being English; some teachers, artists, and workmen, all European. The quarrel which led to the imprisonment of these people was of old standing. Some of the missionaries had been four years in duresse before the expedition was sent out to their rescue. In April 1865, Lord Chelmsford had called the attention of the House of Lords to the treatment which certain British subjects were then receiving at the hands of Theodore, the Negus or supreme ruler of Abyssinia. Theodore was a usurper. Few Eastern sovereigns who have in any way made their mark on history, from Haroun-al-Raschid and Saladin downwards, can be described by any other name than that of usurper. Theodore seems to have been a man of strong barbaric nature, a compound of savage virtue and more than savage ambition and cruelty. He was a sort of wild and barbarous Philip of Macedon. He was open to passionate and lasting friendships; his nature was swept by stormy gusts of anger and hatred. His moods of fury and of mildness came and went like the thunderstorms and calms of a tropic region. He had had a devoted friendship for Mr. Plowden, a former English Consul at Massowah, who had actually lent Theodore his help in putting down a rebellion, and was killed by the rebels in consequence. When Theodore had crushed the rebellion, he slaughtered more than a hundred of the rebel prisoners as a sacrifice to the manes of his English Patroclus. Captain Cameron was sent to succeed Mr. Plowden. It should be stated that neither Mr. Plowden nor Captain Cameron was appointed Consul for any part of Abyssinia. Massowah is an island off the African shore of the Red Sea. It is in Turkish ownership and forms no part of Abyssinia, although it is the principal starting point to the interior of that

country from Egypt, and the great outlet for Abyssinian trade. Consuls were sent to Massowah, according to the terms of Mr. Plowden's appointment in 1848, 'for the protection of British trade with Abyssinia and with the countries adjacent thereto.' Mr. Plowden, however, had made himself an active ally of King Theodore, a course of proceeding which naturally gave great dissatisfaction to the English Government. Captain Cameron, therefore, received positive instructions to take no part in the quarrels of Theodore and his subjects, and was reminded by Lord John Russell that he held 'no representative character in Abyssinia.' It probably seemed to Theodore that the attitude of England was altered and unfriendly, and thus the dispute began which led to the seizure of the missionaries. Captain Cameron seems to have been much wanting in discretion, and Theodore suspected him of intriguing with Egypt. Theodore wrote a letter to Queen Victoria requesting help against the Turks, and for some reason the letter remained unanswered. A story went that Theodore cherished a strong ambition to become the husband of the Queen of England, and even represented that his descent from the Queen of Sheba made him not unworthy of such an alliance. Whether he ever put his proposals into formal shape or not, it is certain that misunderstandings arose; that Theodore fancied himself slighted; and that he wreaked his wrongs by seizing all the British subjects within his reach, and throwing them into captivity. They were put in chains and kept in Magdala, his rock-based capital. Consul Cameron was among the number. He had imprudently gone back into Abyssinia from Massowah, and was at once pounced upon by the furious descendant of Prester John.

The English Government had a difficult task before them. It seemed not unlikely that the first movement made by an invading expedition might be the signal for the massacre of the prisoners. The effect of conciliation was therefore tried in the first instance. Mr. Rassam, who held the office of Assistant British Resident at Aden, a man who had acquired some distinction under Mr. Layard in exploring the remains of Nineveh and Babylon, was sent on a mission to Theodore with a message from Queen Victoria. Lieutenant Prideaux and Dr. Blanc were appointed to accompany him. Theodore played with Mr. Rassam for a while, and then added him and his companions to the number of the captives. Theodore seems to have become more and more possessed with the idea that the English Government were slighting him; and one or two unlucky mishaps or misconceptions gave him some excuse for cherishing the suspicion in his jealous and angry mind. At last an ultimatum was sent by Lord Stanley, demanding the release of the captives within three months on penalty of war. This letter does not seem to have ever reached the King's

hands. The Government made preparations for war, and appointed Sir Robert Napier, now Lord Napier of Magdala, then Commander-in-Chief of the army of Bombay, to conduct the expedition. A winter sitting of Parliament was held in November 1867, supplies were voted, and the expeditionary force set out from Bombay.

The expedition was well managed. Its work was, if we may use a somewhat homely expression, done to time. The military difficulties were not great; but the march had to be made across some four hundred miles of a mountainous and roadless country. The army had to make its way, now under burning sun, and now amid storms of rain and sleet, through broken and perplexing mountain gorges and over mountain heights ten thousand feet above the sea level. Anything like a skilful resistance, even such resistance as savages might well have been expected to make, would have placed the lives of all the force in the utmost danger. The mere work of carrying the supplies safely along through such a country was of itself enough to keep the energies of the invading army on the utmost strain. Meanwhile the captives were dragging out life in the very bitterness of death. The King still oscillated between caprices of kindness and impulses of cruelty. He sometimes strolled in upon the prisoners in careless undress; perhaps in European shirt and trousers, without a coat; and he cheerily brought with him a bottle of wine, which he insisted on the captives sharing with him. At other times he visited them in the mood of one who loved to feast his eyes on the anticipatory terrors of the victims he has determined to destroy. He had still great faith in the fighting power of his Abyssinians. Sometimes he was in high spirits, and declared that he longed for an encounter with the invaders. At other moments, however, and when the steady certain march of the English soldiers was bringing them nearer and nearer, he seems to have lost heart and become impressed with a boding conviction that nothing would ever go well with him again. One description given of him as he looked into the gathering clouds of an evening sky and drew melancholy auguries of his own fate, makes him appear like a barbaric Antony watching the rack dislimn and likening its dispersion to his own vanishing fortunes. Sir Robert Napier arrived in front of Magdala in the beginning of April 1868. One battle was fought on the tenth of the month. Perhaps it ought not to be called a battle. It is better to say that the Abyssinians made such an attack on the English troops as a bull sometimes makes on a railway train in full motion. The Abyssinians attacked with wild courage and spirit. The English weapons and the English discipline simply swept the assailants away. Others came on; wild charges were made again and again; five hundred Abyssinians were killed and three times as many

wounded. Not one of the English force was killed, and only nineteen men were wounded.

Then Theodore tried to come to terms. He sent back all the prisoners, who at last found themselves safe and free under the protection of the English flag. But Theodore would not surrender. Sir Robert Napier had therefore no alternative but to order an assault on his stronghold. Magdala was perched upon cliffs so high and steep, that it was said a cat could not climb them except at two points—one north, and one south—at each of which a narrow path led up to a strong gateway. The attack was made by the northern path, and despite all the difficulties of the ascent, the attacking party reached the gate, forced it, and captured Magdala. Those who first entered found Theodore's dead body inside the gate. Defeated and despairing he had died in the high Roman fashion: by his own hand.

The rock-fortress of King Theodore was destroyed by the conqueror. Sir Robert Napier was unwilling to leave the place in its strength, because he had little doubt that if he did so it would be seized upon by a fierce Mahomedan tribe, the bitter enemies of the Abyssinian Christians. He therefore dismantled and destroyed the place. 'Nothing,' to use his own language, 'but blackened rock' remains of what was Magdala. The expedition returned to the coast almost immediately. In less than a week after the capture of Magdala it was on its march to the sea. On June 21, the troopship *Crocodile* arrived at Plymouth with the first detachment of troops from Abyssinia. Nothing could have been more effectively planned, conducted, and timed than the whole expedition. It went and came to the precise moment appointed for every movement, like an express train. That was its great merit. Warlike difficulties it had none to encounter. No one can doubt that such difficulties too, had they presented themselves, would have been encountered with success. The struggle was against two tough enemies, climate and mountain; and Sir Robert Napier won. He was made Baron Napier of Magdala, and received a pension. The thanks of both Houses of Parliament were voted to the army of Abyssinia and its commander. It was on this occasion that Mr. Disraeli delivered that astonishing burst of eloquence which for the hour turned the attention of the country away from Lord Napier's triumph, and almost succeeded in making the capture of Magdala seem ridiculous. Lord Napier, Mr. Disraeli declared, had led the elephants of India bearing the artillery of Europe through African passes which might have startled the trapper of Canada and appalled the hunter of the Alps; and he wound up by proclaiming, that 'the standard of St. George was hoisted upon the mountains of Rasselas.' All England smiled at the mountains of Rasselas. The idea that Johnson actually had

in his mind the very Abyssinia of geography and of history, when he described his Happy Valley, was in itself trying to gravity. Of the rhetorical passage, it is proper to speak in the words with which the author of Rasselas once interrupted the too ambitious eloquence of a friend. 'Sir, this is sorry stuff,' said Dr. Johnson, 'let me not hear you say it any more.' The worst of Mr. Disraeli's burst of eloquence was, that it could not be got rid of so easily. The orator himself might have gladly consented to let it be heard no more. But the world would not so willingly let it die. Ever since that time, when the expedition to Abyssinia is mentioned in any company, a smile steals over some faces, and more than one voice is heard to murmur an allusion to the mountains of Rasselas.

The widow of King Theodore died in the English camp before the return of the expedition. Theodore's son Alamayou, aged seven years, was taken charge of by Queen Victoria, and for a while educated in India. The boy was afterwards brought to England; but he never reached maturity. All the care that could be taken of him here did not keep him from withering under the influence of an uncongenial civilisation. His young life was as that of some exotic that will not long bear the transplantation to a foreign air. Doubtless too the premature tumult and troubles of his early years told heavily against him. 'There is little difficulty,' says the grim leach in the 'Fair Maid of Perth,' 'in blighting a flower exhausted from having been made to bloom too soon.'

No attempt was made to interfere with the internal affairs of Abyssinia. Having destroyed their monarchy, the invaders left the Abyssinians to do as they would for the establishment of another. Sir Robert Napier declared one of the chiefs a friend of the British, and this chief had some hopes of obtaining the sovereignty of the country. But his rank as a friend of the British did not prevent him from being defeated in a struggle with a rival, and this latter not long after succeeded in having himself crowned king under the title of John the Second. Another Prester John was set up in Abyssinia.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE IRISH CHURCH.

'The Irish Peasant to his Mistress' is the name of one of Moore's finest songs. The Irish peasant tells his mistress of his undying fidelity to her. 'Through grief and through danger' her smile has cheered his way. 'the darker our fortunes the purer thy bright love burned'; it turned shame into glory; fear into zeal. Slave as he was, with her to guide him he felt free. She had a rival; and the rival was honoured, 'while thou wert mocked and scorned.' The rival wore a crown of gold; the other's brows were girt with thorns. The rival wooed him to temples, while the loved one lay hid in caves. 'Her friends were all masters, while thine, alas, are slaves!' 'Yet,' he declares, 'cold in the earth at thy feet I would rather be than wed one I love not, or turn one thought from thee.'

The reader already understands the meaning of this poetic allegory. If he failed to appreciate its feeling it would be hardly possible for him to understand the modern history of Ireland. The Irish peasant's mistress is the Catholic Church. The rival is the State Church set up by English authority. The worshippers in the Catholic faith had long to lie hid in caves, while the followers of the State Church worshipped in temples. The Irish peasant remained through centuries of persecution devotedly faithful to the Catholic Church. Nothing could win or wean him from it. The Irish population of Ireland—there is meaning in the words—were made apparently by nature for the Catholic faith. Hardly any influence on earth could make the genuine Celtic Irishman a Materialist, or what is called in France a Voltairean. For him, as for Schiller's immortal heroine, the kingdom of the spirits is easily opened. Half his thoughts, half his life, belong to a world other than the material world around him. The supernatural becomes almost the natural for him. The streams, the valleys, the hills of his native country are peopled by mystic forms and melancholy legends, which are all but living things for him. Even the railway has not banished from the land his familiar fancies and dreams. The 'good people' still linger around the raths and glens. The banshee even yet laments, in dirge-like wailings, the death of the representative of each ancient house. The very superstitions of the Irish peasant take a devotional form. They are never degrading. His piety is not merely sincere: it is even practical. It sustains him against many hard trials, and enables him to bear, in cheerful patience, a life-long trouble. He praises God for everything; not as an act of mere devotional formality,

but as by instinct; the praise naturally rising to his lips. Old men and women in Ireland who seem, to the observer, to have lived lives of nothing but privation and suffering, are heard to murmur with their latest breath the fervent declaration that the Lord was good to them always. Assuredly this genuine piety does not always prevent the wild Celtic nature from breaking forth into fierce excesses. Stormy outbursts of passion, gusts of savage revenge, too often sweep away the soul of the Irish peasant from the quiet moorings in which his natural piety and the teachings of his Church would hold it. But deep down in his nature is that faith in the other world and its visible connection and intercourse with this; his reverence for the teaching which shows him a clear title to immortality. For this very reason, when the Irish peasant throws off altogether the guidance of religion, he is apt to rush into worse extravagances and excesses than most other men. He is not made to be a rationalist; he is made to be a believer.

The Irishman was bound by ties of indescribable strength and complication to his own Church. It was the teacher of that faith which especially commended itself to his nature and his temperament. It was made to be the symbol and the synonym of patriotism and nationality. Centuries of the cruel, futile attempt to force another religion on him in the name of his English conquerors, had made him regard any effort to change his faith, even by argument, as the attempt of a spy to persuade a soldier to forsake his flag. To abandon the Catholic Church was, for the Irishman, not merely to renounce his religion, but to betray his country. It seemed to him that he could not become a Protestant without also becoming a renegade to the national cause. The State Church set up in Ireland was to him a symbol of oppression. It was Gessler's hat stuck up in the market-place; only a slave would bow down to it. It was idle to tell him of the free spirit of Protestantism; Protestantism stood represented for him by the authority which had oppressed his fellow-countrymen and fellow-Catholics for generations; which had hunted men to the caves and the mountains for being Catholic, and had hanged and disembowelled them for being Irish. Almost every page of the history of the two countries was read with a different interpretation by the Irishman and the Englishman. To the English student Spenser was a patriot as well as a poet; to the Irish scholar he was the bitterest and most unthinking enemy of Ireland. To the Englishman of modern days Cromwell was a great statesman and patriot; the Irishman thought of him only as the remorseless oppressor of Ireland and the author of the massacre of Drogheda. The Englishman hated James II. because he fought against England at the Boyne; the Irishman despised him because he gave up

the fight so soon. Chesterfield was to Englishmen a fribble and a fop; he was to Irishmen of education the one English Lord-Lieutenant who ever seemed to have any comprehension of the real needs of Ireland. Fox was denounced in England and adored in Ireland because he made himself the champion of the principle of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas. One of Byron's chief offences in the eyes of English Conservatives was that his enthusiasm for Ireland was almost equal to his enthusiasm for Greece. Again and again, in every generation, the object of admiration to Englishmen was the object of distrust or dislike, or both, to all Irishmen who professed to have in them anything of the sentiment of nationality. All this feeling of antagonism was undoubtedly strengthened and sharpened by the existence of the State Church. There was not one rational word to be said on principle for the maintenance of such an institution. Sydney Smith said, in his humorous way: 'There is no abuse like it in all Europe, in all Asia, in all the discovered parts of Africa, and in all we have heard of Timbuctoo.' No foreign statesman probably ever admired English institutions more than Count Cavour did. Yet Cavour wrote that the State Church in Ireland 'remains to the Catholics a representative of the cause of their miseries, a sign of defeat and oppression. It exasperates their sufferings and makes their humiliation more keenly felt.' Every argument in favour of the State Church in England was an argument against the State Church in Ireland. The English Church, as an institution, is defended on the ground that it represents the religious convictions of the great majority of the English people, and that it is qualified to take welcome charge of those who would otherwise be left without any religious care or teaching in England. The Catholics in Ireland were, to all other denominations together, as five to one; the State Church represented only a small proportion of a very small minority. There was not the slightest pretext for affecting to believe that it could become the mother and the guardian of orphans and waifs among the Irish people. In many places the Protestant clergyman preached to a dozen listeners; in some places he thought himself lucky when he could get half a dozen. There were places with a Protestant clergyman and Protestant church and absolutely no Protestant worshippers. There had not of late years been much positive hostility to the State Church among the Irish people. Since the abolition of the system of tithes, since the dues of the parson were no longer collected by an armed military force with occasional accompaniment of bloodshed, the bitterness of popular feeling had very much mitigated. The Irish people grew to be almost indifferent on the subject. 'With Henry II.,' says Sydney Smith, 'came in tithes, to which, in all probability, about one million of lives may have been sacrificed in Ireland.'

All that was changed at last. So long as the clergyman was content to live quietly and mind his own flock, where he had any to mind, his Catholic neighbours were not disposed to trouble themselves much about him. If, indeed, he attempted to do that which, by all strict logical reasoning, he must have regarded himself as appointed to do—if he attempted any work of conversion, then he aroused such a storm of anger that he generally found it prudent to withdraw from the odious and hopeless enterprise. If he was a sensible man he was usually content to minister to his own people and meddle no further with others. In the large towns he generally had his considerable congregation, and was busy enough. In some of the country places of the south and west he preached every Sunday to his little flock of five or six, while the congregation of the Catholic chapel a short distance off were covering great part of the hillside around the chapel door, because their numbers were many times too great to allow them to find room within the building itself. Sydney Smith has described, in a few words, the condition of things as it existed in his time: 'On an Irish Sabbath the bell of a neat parish church often summons to church only the parson and an occasionally conforming clerk; while two hundred yards off a thousand Catholics are huddled together in a miserable hovel and pelted by all the storms of heaven.' In days nearer to our own the miserable hovel had for the most part given place to a large and handsome church; in many places to a vast and stately cathedral. Nothing could be more remarkable than the manner in which the voluntary offerings of the Irish Catholics covered the face of the country with churches dedicated to the uses of their faith. Often the contributions came in liberal measure from Irishmen settled in far-off countries who were not likely ever again to see their native fields. Irish Catholic priests crossed the Atlantic, crossed even the Pacific, to ask for help to maintain their churches; and there came from Quebec and Ontario, from New York, New Orleans and Chicago, from Melbourne and Sydney, from Tasmania and New Zealand, the money which put up churches and spires on the Irish mountain-sides. The proportion between the Protestants and the Catholics began to tell more and more disadvantageously for the State Church as years went on. Of late the influx of the Catholic working population into the northern province threatens to overthrow the supremacy of Protestantism in Protestantism's own stronghold.

It has often been said that if England had not persecuted the Catholics, if she had not thrust her State Church on them under circumstances which made it an insolent badge of conquest, the Irish people might have been gradually won over to the religion of England. To us nothing

seems more unlikely than any such change. The Irish people, we are convinced, would under any circumstances whatever have remained faithful to the Catholic Church. As we have already endeavoured to show, it is the Church which seems specially appointed to be the guide of their feelings and their nature. But it is certain that if there had been no persecution and no State Church the feelings of the Irish people towards England would have been very different from what they actually are even at this day. There would have been no rebellion of 1798. There would have been no hatred of Protestant to Catholic, Catholic to Protestant. All this is obvious; everyone says as much now. But there is another view of the question; there is another harmful effect of the State Church and its surroundings, which is not so often considered nor so commonly admitted. This is the indirect harm which was done by the setting up in Ireland of a 'British party,' to employ a phrase once familiar in politics, a party supposed to represent the interests of the English Government, and indeed to be, as it was commonly called, the Protestant garrison in Ireland. Naturally the Government always acted on the advice of that party, and as a matter of course they were frequently deceived. The British party had no way of getting at the real feelings of the Irish people; they were among them, but not of them. They kept on continually assuring the Government that there was no real cause of dissatisfaction in Ireland; that the objection to this or that odious institution or measure came only from a few agitators, and not from the whole population. It will not be forgotten that down to the very outbreak of the American War of Independence there were the remnants of a British party in the Northern States, who assured the English Government that there was no real dissatisfaction among the American colonists, and no idea whatever of severing the connection with England. The same sort of counsel was given, the same fatal service was rendered, on almost all important occasions by the British party in Ireland. It was probably from observing this condition of things that Mr. Gladstone came to the conclusion that the Fenian outbreak, the Manchester rescue, and the Clerkenwell explosion furnished a proper opportunity for a new system of legislation in Ireland. Few actions on the part of a public man have been more persistently misrepresented or more obstinately misunderstood than the course taken by Mr. Gladstone. It has been constantly asserted that he declared himself impelled to propose new legislation for Ireland by the violence of the Fenian enterprises, and that he thus held out a premium to political agitation of the most audacious kind by offering an assurance to the agitator that if he would only be daring and lawless enough he might have full gratification of his demands. Yet Mr. Gladstone's mean-

ing was surely plain. He saw that the one great difficulty in the way of substantial legislation for Irish grievances had always been found in the fact that the English Parliament and public did not believe in the reality of the grievance. Englishmen put aside every claim made on behalf of Ireland with the assurance that the Irish people were entirely indifferent on the subject; that the Irish people felt no grievance, and therefore had not complained of any. The Fenian movement was in Mr. Gladstone's eyes the most substantial refutation of this comfortable belief. The most easy-going and self-complacent Philistine could not feel satisfied that there was no grievance pressing on the minds of the Irish people when he found rebellion going on under his very eyes, and Fenian devotees braving death for their cause and its captains in his very streets. Mr. Gladstone was right. One of the sad defects of our parliamentary system is that no remedy is likely to be tried for any evil until the evil has made its presence felt in some startling way. The Clerkenwell explosion was but one illustration of a common condition of things. We seldom have any political reform without a previous explosion.

On March 16, 1868, a remarkable debate took place in the House of Commons. It had for its subject the condition of Ireland, and it was introduced by a series of resolutions which Mr. John Francis Maguire, an Irish member, proposed. Mr. Maguire was a man of high character and great ability and earnestness. He was a newspaper proprietor and an author; he knew Ireland well, but he also knew England and the temper of the English people. He was ardent in his national sympathies; but he was opposed to any movement of a seditious or a violent character. He had more than once risked his popularity among his countrymen by the resolute stand which he made against any agitation that tended towards rebellion. Mr. Maguire always held that the geographical situation of England and Ireland rendered a separation of the two countries impossible. He had often expressed his belief that even in the event of a war between England and some foreign State—the American Republic, for instance—and even in the event of England's losing temporary possession of Ireland, one of the conditions of peace which the foreign power would most freely accept would be the handing back of Ireland to Great Britain. To his mind, then, separation was a result not to be seriously thought of. But he accepted cordially the saying of Grattan that if the ocean forbade separation, the sea denied union. He was in favour of a domestic legislature for Ireland, and he was convinced that such a measure would be found the means of establishing a true and genial union of feeling, a friendly partnership between the two countries. Mr. Maguire was looked on with respect and confidence by all parties in England as

well as in his own country. Even the Fenians, whose schemes he condemned as he had condemned the Young Ireland movement of 1848, were willing to admit his honesty and his courage, for they found that there was no stauncher advocate in Parliament for a generous dealing with the Fenian prisoners. A speaker of remarkable power and earnestness, although occasionally too vehement of words and gesture, he was always listened to with attention in the House of Commons. It was well known that he had declined tenders of office from both of the great English parties; and it was known too that he had done this at a time when his personal interests made his refusal a considerable sacrifice. When therefore he invited the attention of the House of Commons to the condition of Ireland, the House knew that it was likely to have a fair and a trustworthy exposition of the subject. In the course of his speech, Mr. Maguire laid great stress upon the evil effect wrought upon Ireland by the existence of the Irish Church. He described it as 'a scandalous and monstrous anomaly.' During the debate Lord Mayo, then Irish Secretary, made a speech in which he threw out some hint about a policy of equalising all religious denominations in Ireland without sacrificing the Irish Church. He talked in a mysterious way of 'levelling up, and not leveling down.' It has never since been known for certain whether he was giving a hint of a scheme actually in the mind of the Government; whether he was speaking as one set up to feel his way into the opinion of the House of Commons and the public; or whether he was only following out some sudden and irresponsible speculations of his own. The words, however, produced a great effect on the House of Commons. It became evident at once that the question of the Irish Church was making itself at last a subject for the practical politician. Mr. Bright in the course of the debate strongly denounced the Irish Establishment, and enjoined the Government and all the great English parties to rise to the occasion and resolve to deal in some serious way with the condition of Ireland. Difficulties of the gravest nature he fully admitted were yet in the way, but he reminded the House in tones of solemn and penetrating earnestness that 'to the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.' But it was on the fourth night of the debate that the importance of the occasion became fully manifest. Then it was that Mr. Gladstone spoke, and declared that in his opinion the time had come when the Irish Church as a State institution must cease to exist. Then every man in the House knew that the end was near. Mr. Maguire withdrew his resolutions. The cause he had to serve was now in the hands of one who, though not surely more earnest for its success, had incomparably greater power to serve it. The Protestant garrison in Ireland was doomed. There was probably not a

single Englishman capable of forming an opinion who did not know that from the moment when Mr. Gladstone made his declaration, the fall of the Irish State Church had become merely a question of time. Men only waited to see how Mr. Gladstone would proceed to procure its fall.

Public expectation was not long kept in suspense. A few days after the debate on Mr. Maguire's motion, Mr. Gladstone gave notice of a series of resolutions on the subject of the Irish State Church. The resolutions were three in number. The first declared that in the opinion of the House of Commons it was necessary that the Established Church of Ireland should cease to exist as an Establishment, due regard being had to all personal interests and to all individual rights of property. The second resolution pronounced it expedient to prevent the creation of new personal interests by the exercise of any public patronage; and the third asked for an address to the Queen, praying that her Majesty would place at the disposal of Parliament her interest in the temporalities of the Irish Church. The object of these resolutions was simply to prepare for the actual disestablishment of the Church, by providing that no further appointments should be made, and that the action of patronage should be stayed, until Parliament should decide the fate of the whole institution. On March 30, 1868, Mr. Gladstone proposed his resolutions. Not many persons could have had much doubt as to the result of the debate. But if there were any such their doubts must have begun to vanish when they read the notice of amendment to the resolutions which was given by Lord Stanley. The amendment proclaimed even more surely than the resolutions the impending fall of the Irish Church. Lord Stanley must have been supposed to speak in the name of the Government and the Conservative party; and his amendment merely declared that the House, while admitting that considerable modifications in the temporalities of the Church in Ireland might appear to be expedient, was of opinion 'that any proposition tending to the disestablishment or disendowment of that Church ought to be reserved for the decision of the new Parliament.' Mr. Gladstone seized on the evidence offered by the terms of such an amendment. He observed that before the hour at which notice was given of that amendment, he had thought the thread of the remaining life of the Irish Established Church was short, but since the notice was given he thought it shorter still. For, as Mr. Gladstone put it, suppose his resolutions had been declarations calling for the abolition of the House of Lords, was it possible to conceive that the Government would have met them by an amendment admitting that the constitution of the Upper House might appear to stand in need of considerable modification, but offering the opinion that any proposal tending to the abolition of that

House ought to be left to the decision of a new Parliament? If such an amendment were offered by the Government, the whole country would at once understand that it was not intended to defend the existence of the House of Lords. So the country now understood with regard to the Irish Church. Lord Stanley's amendment asked only for delay. It did not plead that to-morrow would be sudden; it only asked that the stroke of doom should not be allowed to fall on the Irish Church to-day.

The debate was one of great power and interest. Some of the speakers were heard at their very best. Mr. Bright made a speech which was well worthy of the occasion and the orator. Mr. Gathorne Hardy was in his very element. He flung aside all consideration of amendment, compromise, or delay, and went in for a vehement defence of the Irish Church. He spoke in the spirit of M. Rouher's famous *Jamais!* Mr. Hardy was not a debater of keen logical power nor an orator of genuine inspiration, but he always could rattle a defiant drum with excellent effect. He beat the war-drum this time with tremendous energy. On the other hand Mr. Lowe threw an intensity of bitterness remarkable even for him into the unsparing logic with which he assailed the Irish Church. That Church, he said, was 'like an exotic brought from a far country, tended with infinite pains and useless trouble. It is kept alive with the greatest difficulty and at great expense in an ungenial climate and an ungrateful soil. The curse of barrenness is upon it. It has no leaves, puts forth no blossom, and yields no fruit. Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?' Not the least remarkable speech of the debate was that made by Lord Cranbourne, who denounced the Government of which he was not long since a member with an energy of hatred almost like ferocity. He accused his late colleagues of having in every possible way betrayed the cause of Conservatism, and he assailed Mr. Disraeli personally in a manner which made older members think of the days when Mr. Disraeli was denouncing Sir Robert Peel. No eloquence and no invective however could stay the movement begun by Mr. Gladstone. When the division was called there were 331 votes for the resolutions and only 270 against them. The doom of the Irish Church was pronounced by a majority of 61. Mr. Disraeli made a wild effort by speech and by letter to get up an alarm in the country on the score of some imaginary alliance or conspiracy between 'High Church Ritualists' and 'Irish Romanists.' The attempt was a complete failure; there was only a little flash; no explosion came. The country did not show the slightest alarm. An interval was afforded for agitation on both sides. The House of Commons had only decided against Lord Stanley's amendment. Mr. Gladstone's resolutions had yet to be discussed. Lord

Russell presided at a great meeting held in St. James's Hall for the purpose of expressing public sympathy with the movement to disestablish the Irish Church. Many meetings were held by those on the other side of the question as well; but it was obvious to every one that there was no great force in the attempt at a defence of the Irish Church. That institution had in truth a position which only became less and less defensible the more it was studied. Every example and argument drawn from the history of the Church of England was but another condemnation of the Church of Ireland. During one of the subsequent debates in the House of Lords, Lord Derby introduced with remarkable effect an appropriate quotation from Scott's 'Guy Mannering.' He was warning his listeners that if they helped the enemies of the Irish Church to pull it down, they would be preparing the way for the destruction of the English Church as well. He turned to that striking passage in 'Guy Mannering,' where Meg Merrilies confronts the laird of Ellangowan after the eviction of the gipsies, and warns him that 'this day have ye quenched seven smoking hearths;—see if the fire in your ain parlour burn the blyther for that; ye have riven the thack off seven cottar houses—look if your ain roof-tree stand the faster.' Nothing could be more apt as a political appeal or more effective in a rhetorical sense than this quotation. But it did not illustrate the relations between the English and the Irish Church. The real danger to the English Church would have been a protracted and obstinate maintenance of the Church of Ireland. It is not necessary here to enter upon any of the general arguments for or against the principle of a State Church. But it will be admitted by every one that the claim made on behalf of the Church of England is that it is the Church of the great majority of the English people, and that it has a spiritual work to do which the majority of the nation admit to be its appropriate task. To maintain the Church of England on that ground is only to condemn the Church of Ireland. The more strongly an Englishman was inclined to support his own Church, the more anxious he ought to have been to repudiate the claim of the Irish Church to a similar position. The State Church in Ireland was like a mildewed ear blasting its wholesome brother. If the two institutions had to stand or fall together, there could be but one end to the difficulty; both must fall.

Mr. Gladstone's first resolution came to a division about a month after the defeat of Lord Stanley's amendment. It was carried by a majority somewhat larger than that which had rejected the amendment. 330 votes were given for the resolution; 265 against it. The majority for the resolution was therefore 65. Mr. Disraeli quietly observed that the Government must take some decisive step in consequence of that

vote; and a few days afterwards it was announced that as soon as the necessary business could be got through, Parliament would be dissolved and an appeal made to the country. On the last day of July the dissolution took place, and the elections came on in November. Not for many years had there been so important a general election. The keenest anxiety prevailed as to its results. The new constituencies created by the Reform Bill were to give their votes for the first time. The question at issue was not merely the existence of the Irish State Church. It was a general struggle of advanced Liberalism against Toryism. No one could doubt that Mr. Gladstone, if he came into power, would enter on a policy of more decided Liberalism than had ever been put into action since the days of the Reform Bill of Lord Grey and Lord John Russell. The result of the elections was on the whole what might have been expected. The Liberals had a great majority. But there were many curious and striking instances of the growing strength of Conservatism in certain parts of the country. Lancashire, once a very stronghold of Liberalism, returned only Tories for its county divisions, and even in most cases elected Tories to represent its boroughs. Eight Conservatives came in for the county of Lancaster, and among those whom their election displaced were no less eminent persons than Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington. Mr. Gladstone was defeated in South-west Lancashire, but the result of the contest had been generally anticipated, and therefore some of his supporters put him up for Greenwich also and he was elected there. He had been passing step by step from less popular to more popular constituencies. From the University of Oxford he had passed to the Lancashire division, and now from the Lancashire constituency he went on to a place where the Liberal portion of the electors were inclined, for the most part, to be not merely Radical but democratic. The contest in North Lancashire was made more interesting than it would otherwise have been by the fact that it was not alone a struggle between opposing principles and parties, but also one between two great rival houses. Lord Hartington represented the great Cavendish family. Mr. Frederick Stanley was the younger son of Lord Derby. Lord Hartington was defeated by a large majority, and was left out of Parliament for a few months. He was afterwards elected for the Radnor Boroughs. Mr. Mill was defeated at Westminster. His defeat was brought about by a combination of causes. He had been elected in a moment of sudden enthusiasm, and the enthusiasm had now had time to cool away. He had given some offence in various quarters by a too great independence of action and of expression. On many questions of deep interest he had shown that he was entirely out of harmony with the views of the vast

majority of his constituents, whatever their religious denomination might be. He had done some things which people called eccentric, and an English popular constituency does not love eccentricity. His opponent, Mr. W. H. Smith, was very popular in Westminster, and had been quietly canvassing it for years. Perhaps it may be hinted too that Mr. Mill's manly resolve not to pay any part of his election expenses did not contribute to make him a favourite candidate with a certain proportion of the constituency. He was known to be a generous and a charitable man. He gave largely out of his modest fortune towards any purpose which he thought deserving of support. But he disapproved of the principle of calling on a candidate to pay for permission to perform very onerous public duties, and he would not consent to recognise the principle by contributing anything towards the cost of his own candidature. This was against him in the mind of many. In every great constituency there is a certain proportion of voters who like the idea of a man's being liberal of his money in a contest, even though they do not expect to have any share of it. Some of the Westminster electors had probably grown tired of being represented by one who was called a philosopher. Some other prominent public men lost their seats. Mr. Roebuck was defeated in Sheffield. His defeat was partly due to the strong stand he had made against the trades unions; but still more to the bitterness of the hostility he had shown to the Northern States during the American Civil War. Mr. Milner Gibson and Mr. Bernal Osborne were also unseated. The latter got into Parliament again. The former disappeared from public life. He had done good service at one time as an ally of Cobden and Bright. Mr. Lowe was elected the first representative of the University of London, on which, as it will be remembered, the Conservative Reform Bill had conferred a seat. Mr. Disraeli afterwards humorously claimed the credit of having enabled Mr. Lowe to carry on his public career by providing for him the only constituency in England which would have accepted him as its representative. One curious fact about the elections was that the extreme democratic candidates, and those who were called the working men's candidates, were in every instance rejected. This was the first general election with household suffrage in boroughs and a lowered franchise in counties. It might have been supposed that the votes of the working men, of 'the people who live in those small houses' would have decided many a contest in favour of the candidates representing their cause or their class. But the candidates who appealed especially to working men failed in every instance to secure election. Mr. Ernest Jones, Mr. Beales, Mr. Mason Jones, Mr. Odger, Mr. Bradlaugh, tried and failed. Either our new masters were not so powerful as they were

expected to prove, or they were very much like our old masters in their taste for representation. The new Parliament was to all appearance less marked in its Liberalism than that which had gone before it. But so far as mere numbers went the Liberal party was much stronger than it had been. In the new House of Commons it could count upon a majority of about 120, whereas in the late Parliament it had but 60. Mr. Gladstone it was clear would now have everything in his own hands, and the country might look for a career of energetic reform.

While the debates on Mr. Gladstone's resolutions were still going on, there came to England the news that Lord Brougham was dead. He had died at Cannes in his ninetieth year. His death was a quiet passing away from a world that had well-nigh forgotten him. Seldom has a political career been so strangely cut short as that of Lord Brougham. From the time when the Whig Administration was formed without him, he seemed to have no particular business in public life. He never had from that hour the slightest influence on any political party or any political movement. His restless figure was seen moving about the House of Lords like that of a man who felt himself out of place there, and was therefore out of humour with himself and his company. He often took part in debate, and for many years he continued to show all the fire and energy of his earlier days. But of late he had almost entirely dropped out of politics. Happily for him the Social Science Association was formed, and he acted for a long time as its principal guide, philosopher, and friend. He made speeches at its meetings, presided at many of its banquets, and sometimes showed that he could still command the resources of a massive eloquence. His social science had a curious air of unreality about it. It seemed as if it had been hastily put together out of that *Penny Cyclopædia* in which at one time he had so much concern. The men of the younger generation looked at him with interest and wonder; they found it hard to realise the fact that only a few years before he was one of the most conspicuous and energetic figures in political agitation. Now he seemed oddly like some dethroned king who occupies his leisure in botanical studies: some once famous commander, long out of harness, who amuses himself with learning the flute. There were perhaps some who forgot Brougham the great reformer altogether, and only thought of Brougham the patron and orator of the Social Science Association. He passed his time between Cannes, which he may be said to have discovered, and London. At one time he had had the idea of actually becoming a citizen of France, being of opinion that it would set a good example for the brotherhood of peoples if he were to show how a man could be a French and an English citizen at the same moment. He had out-lived nearly all his early friends and foes.

Melbourne, Grey, Durham, Campbell, Lyndhurst, had passed away. The death of Lyndhurst had been a great grief to him. It is said that in his failing, later years he often directed his coachman to drive him to Lord Lyndhurst's house, as if his old friend and gossip were still among the living. At last Brougham began to give unmistakable signs of vanishing intelligence. His appearances in public were mournful exhibitions. He sometimes sat at a dinner-party and talked loudly to himself of something which had no concern with the time, the place, or the company. His death created but a mere momentary thrill of emotion in England. He had made bitter enemies and cherished strong hatreds in his active years; and like all men who have strong hatreds, he had warm affections too. But the close friends and the bitter enemies were gone alike; had 'passed like snow, long, long ago, with the time of the Barmecides;' and the agitation about the Irish Church was scarcely interrupted for a moment by the news of his death. Brougham's writings are not read now. No one turns to his speeches; those speeches that once set England aflame. His philosophy, his learning, his science, his Greek were all so curiously superficial, that it is no wonder if enemies sometimes declared them to be mere sham. As the memoirs of his contemporaries begin to be published we receive more and more evidence of the prodigious vanity which made Brougham believe that no one could do anything so well in any department as he could do everything in every department. The *Edinburgh Review* he appears to have regarded as a means by which he was to display the genius and acquirements, and others were to puff the speeches, of Henry Brougham. A strange sight was seen one day at a meeting of the Social Science Association, when Lord Brougham, then on the eve of his complete intellectual decline, introduced to the company a man so old that he seemed to belong to an elder world altogether; a man with a wasted, wrinkled, wizard-like face, who wore a black silk skull-cap and a gaberdine. This was Robert Owen, and it was Owen's last appearance in public. He died a few days after in his ninetieth year. Brougham at that time was ten years younger, and he introduced Owen with all the respectful and almost filial carefulness which sturdy youth might show to sinking age. For the moment it would almost seem as if the self-conceit which made Brougham believe himself a great critic and a great Greek scholar had made him also believe that for him time was nothing, and that he was still a young man.

CHAPTER LVIII.

'IRISH IDEAS.'

Seventy years before Mr. Gladstone's accession to the office of First Lord of the Treasury, Fox had enunciated the principle that Ireland ought to be governed by Irish ideas. 'I would have the Irish Government,' said Fox in 1797, 'regulated by Irish notions and Irish prejudices; and I firmly believe, according to an Irish expression, that the more she is under Irish government, the more she will be bound to English interests.' Now for the first time a great statesman at the head of an English Government was about to make an effort at the practical realisation of Fox's principle. At all other times even the most considerate of English Ministers had only thought of doing good to Ireland after the English notion of what was good. The highest idea of statesmanship went no farther than that of giving Ireland what were called equal laws with England. What England had and liked must be the best for Ireland. Such was the position assumed with quiet, sincere complacency in the course of many a parliamentary debate. What more, it was asked, can Ireland want? Has she not equal laws with England? We have a State Church; she has a State Church. She has the same land laws that are found to suit England, or, at least, that are found to suit the landlord class in England. What can England do for her more than to give her the same legislation that England herself enjoys? Now, for the first time, the man at the head of an English Government was equal to an acknowledgment of what one might have thought the simple and elementary fact in politics, that the system which is a blessing to one country may be a curse to its neighbour. That which is called equality of system is sometimes only such equality as that illustrated by the too often quoted yet very appropriate example of Procrustes' bed. Ireland had been stretched upon that bed for centuries, often with the best possible intentions on the part of some well-meaning political Procrustes, who could not for the life of him see why she should not like to be lengthened or shortened, pulled this way or that, in order to bring her into seeming harmony with the habitudes and the constitutional systems of England.

The Parliament which was called together in the close of 1868 was known to have before it this great task of endeavouring to govern Ireland according to Irish ideas. Mr. Gladstone had proclaimed this purpose himself. He had made it known that he would endeavour to deal with Ire-

land's three great difficulties—the State Church, the tenure of land, and the system of national education. Men's minds were wrought up to the enterprise. The country was in a temper to try heroic remedies. The public were tired of government which merely tinkered at legislation, putting in a little patch here, and stopping up for a moment a little hole there. Perhaps, therefore, there was a certain disappointment as the general character of the new Parliament began to be understood. The eminent men on whom all eyes turned in the old Parliament were to be seen of all eyes in the new. It was clear that Mr. Gladstone would be master of the situation. But there did not seem anything particularly hero-like in the general aspect of the new House of Commons. Its composition was very much the same as that of the old. Vast sums of money had been spent upon the elections. Rich men were, as before, in immense preponderance. Elder and younger sons of great families were as many as ever. The English constituencies under the new suffrage were evidently no whit less fond of lords, no whit less devoted to wealth, than they had been under the old. Not a single man of extreme democratic opinions had a seat in the new House of Commons. Where any marked change had been made, it showed itself in removing such men from Parliament rather than in returning them to it.

Mr. Disraeli did not meet the new Parliament as Prime Minister. He decided very properly that it would be a mere waste of public time to wait for the formal vote of the House of Commons, which would inevitably command him to surrender. He at once resigned his office, and Mr. Gladstone was immediately sent for by the Queen, and invited to form an Administration. Mr. Gladstone, it would seem, was only beginning his career. He was nearly sixty years of age, but there were scarcely any evidences of advancing years to be seen on his face, and he had all the fire of proud, indomitable youth in his voice and his manner. He had come into office at the head of a powerful party. There was hardly anything he could not do with such a following and with such personal energy. The Government he formed was one of remarkable strength. The one name upon its list, after that of the Prime Minister himself, which engaged the interest of the public was that of Mr. Bright. Speaking to his Birmingham constituents on his re-election after accepting the office of the President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Bright referred to his new position in a few sentences of impressive and dignified eloquence. He had not sought office, he said; it had come to him. 'I should have preferred much to remain in the common rank of the simple citizenship in which heretofore I have lived. There is a charming story contained in a single verse of the Old Testament, which has often struck me as one of great

beauty. Many of you will recollect that the prophet, in journeying to and fro, was very hospitably entertained by what is termed in the Bible a Shunammite woman. In return for the hospitality of his entertainment he wished to make her some amends, and he called her and asked her what there was that he should do for her. "Shall I speak for thee to the king or to the captain of the host?" and it has always appeared to me a great answer that the Shunammite woman returned. She said, "I dwell among my own people." When the question was put to me whether I would step into the position in which I now find myself, the answer from my heart was the same—I wish to dwell among my own people.' It was impossible, however, that a ministry could now be formed without Mr. Bright's name appearing in it. Mr. Gladstone at first offered him the office of Secretary of State for India. The state of Mr. Bright's health would not allow him to undertake the very laborious duties of such a place, and probably in any case it would have been repugnant to his feelings to accept a position which might have called on him to give orders for the undertaking of a war. Every man in a Cabinet is of course responsible for all its acts; but there is still an evident difference, so far as personal feeling is concerned, between acquiescing in some inevitable policy of war and actually directing that war shall be made. The position of President of the Board of Trade was that which had been offered by Lord Palmerston to Mr. Bright's old friend, Richard Cobden, and it seemed in every way well suited to Mr. Bright himself. Many men felt a doubt as to the possibility of Mr. Bright's subduing his personal independence and his outspoken ways to the discipline and reticence of a Cabinet, and Mr. Bright himself appeared to be a little afraid that he should be understood as thoroughly approving of every measure in which he might, by official order, feel compelled to acquiesce. He cautioned his Birmingham constituents not to believe that he had changed any of his opinions until his own voice publicly proclaimed the change, and he made what might almost be called an appeal to them to remember that he was now one man serving in a band of men; no longer responsible only for himself, no longer independent of the acts of others.

Lord Granville was Secretary for the Colonies under the new Administration; Lord Clarendon Foreign Secretary. The Duke of Argyll was entrusted with the India Office. Mr. Cardwell, to all appearance one of the coldest and least warlike of men, was made Secretary for War, and had in his charge one of the greatest reforms of the administration. Lord Hartington, Lord Dufferin, Mr. Childers, and Mr. Bruce had places assigned to them. Mr. Layard became First Commissioner of Public Works. Mr. W. E. Forster had the office of Vice-President of the

Council, and came in for work hardly less important than that of the Prime Minister himself. The Lord Chancellor was Lord Hatherley, formerly Sir William Page Wood. Many years before, when Lord Hatherley was only known as a rising man among advanced Liberals, and when Mr. Bright was still regarded by all true Conservatives as a Radical demagogue, Mr. Bright and Mr. Wood were talking of the political possibilities of the future. Mr. Bright jestingly expressed a hope that whenever he came to be member of a Cabinet, Mr. Wood might be the Lord Chancellor. Nothing could then have seemed less likely to come to pass. As Lord Hatherley and Mr. Bright met on their way to Windsor to wait on the Queen, Mr. Bright reminded his colleague of the jest that had apparently been prophetic.

Mr. Gladstone went to work at once with his Irish policy. The new Parliament was opened by commission on December 10, for the election of Speaker and the swearing in of the members. The real work of the session began on the 16th of the following February 1869. The Royal speech declared that the ecclesiastical arrangements of Ireland would be brought under the consideration of the House at a very early date, and that 'the legislation which will be necessary in order to their final adjustment will make the largest demands on the wisdom of Parliament.' The Queen expressed her conviction that Parliament, in considering that legislation, would 'be governed by the constant aim to promote the welfare of religion through the principles of equal justice; to secure the action of the undivided feeling and opinion of Ireland on the side of loyalty and law; to efface the memory of former contentions, and to cherish the sympathies of an affectionate people.' On March 1 the Prime Minister introduced his measure for the disestablishment and the partial disendowment of the Irish State Church. He introduced the measure in a speech which occupied more than three hours in the delivery, but which even Mr. Disraeli admitted did not contain one sentence that the subject and the argument could well have spared.

The proposals of the Government were, that the Irish Church should almost at once cease to exist as a State establisment, and should pass into the condition of a free Episcopal Church. As a matter of course the Irish bishops were to lose their seats in the House of Lords. A synodal, or governing body, was to be elected from the clergy and laity of the Church and was to be recognised by the Government, and duly incorporated. The union between the Churches of England and Ireland was to be dissolved, and the Irish Ecclesiastical Courts were to be abolished. There were various and complicated arrangements for the protection of the life interests of those already holding positions in the Irish Church, and for the appropria-

tion of the fund which would return to the possession of the State when all these interests had been fairly considered and dealt with. It must be owned that the Government dealt with vested interests in no niggard spirit. If they erred at all they erred on the side of too much generosity. But they had arrayed against them adversaries so strong that they probably felt it absolutely necessary to buy off some of the opposition by a liberal compensation to all those who were to be deprived of their dignity as clergymen of a State Church. When, however, all had been paid off who could establish any claim, and some perhaps who had in strict fairness no claim whatever, there remained a large fund at the disposal of the Government. This they resolved to set apart for the relief of unavoidable suffering in Ireland. It was not made very clear in the bill itself what the precise purposes were to which the surplus was to be applied, and there was a good deal of disputation afterwards as to the appropriation of the money. Mr. Gladstone's words, and the words used in the preamble of the bill, were the relief of 'unavoidable calamity and suffering.' Mr. Gladstone spoke of making provision for the blind, the deaf, and the dumb, for reformatories, the training of nurses, and the support of county infirmaries. In a speech delivered at a later stage of the debate, Mr. Bright asked the House whether it would not be better to dispose of the money in such charitable dealing than in continuing to maintain three times the number of clergymen that could be of the slightest use to the Church with which they were connected. 'We can,' he said, 'do but little, it is true. We cannot re-illume the extinguished lamp of reason; we cannot make the deaf to hear; we cannot make the dumb to speak; it is not given to us

> From the thick film to purge the visual ray,
> And on the sightless eyeballs pour the day;

but at least we can lessen the load of affliction, and we can make life more tolerable to vast numbers who suffer.' The sum to be disposed of was very considerable. The gross value of the Irish Church property was estimated at sixteen millions. From this sum would have to be deducted nearly five millions for the vested interests of incumbents; one million seven hundred thousand for compensations to curates and lay compensations; half a million for private endowments; for the Maynooth Grant and the Regium Donum about a million and a quarter. There would be left nearly nine millions for any beneficent purpose on which the Government and the country could make up their minds. The Maynooth Grant and the Regium Donum were to go with the Irish Church, and the same principle of compensation was to be applied to those who were to

be deprived of them. The Regium Donum was an allowance from the Sovereign for the maintenance of Presbyterian ministers in Ireland. It was begun by Charles II. and let drop by James, but was restored by William III. William felt grateful for the support given him by the Presbyterians in Ireland during his contest with James, and indeed had little preference for one form of the Protestant faith over another. William, in the first instance, fixed the grant as a charge upon the customs of Belfast. The Maynooth Grant has been already described in these pages. Both these grants, each a very small thing in itself, now came to an end, and the principle of equality among the religious denominations of Ireland was to be established.

We need not carry the reader through the long course of the debates which took place in the House of Commons. The bill was stoutly resisted by Mr. Disraeli and his party. They resisted it as a whole, and they also fought it in detail. They proposed amendment after amendment in committee, and did all they could to stay its progress as well as to alter some of its arrangements. But there did not seem to be much of genuine earnestness in the speeches made by Mr. Disraeli. The fact that resistance was evidently hopeless had no doubt some effect upon the style of his eloquence. His speeches were amusing rather than impressive. They were full of good points; they sparkled with happy illustrations and allusions, odd conceits and bewildering paradoxes. But the orator had evidently no faith in the cause he advocated; no faith, that is to say, in the possibility of its success. He must have seen too clearly that the Church as a State establishment in Ireland was doomed, and he had not that intensity of interest in its maintenance which would have made him fight the course, as he had fought many a course before, with all the passionate eloquence of desperation. One of his lieutenants, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, was more effective as a champion of the sinking Irish Church than Mr. Disraeli proved himself to be. Mr. Hardy was a man so constituted as to be only capable of seeing one side of a question at a time. He was filled with the conviction that the Government were attempting an act of spoliation and sacrilege, and he stormed against the meditated crime with a genuine energy which occasionally seemed to supply him with something like eloquence. A peculiar interest attached to the part taken in the debate by Sir Roundell Palmer. It was natural that Sir Roundell Palmer should be with Mr. Gladstone. Everyone expected in the first instance that he would have held high office in the new Administration. He was one of the very foremost lawyers and the best Parliamentary debaters of the day, and the woolsack seemed to be his fitting place. But Sir Roundell Palmer could not conscientiously agree to the

disestablishment of the Irish State Church. He was willing to consent to very extensive alterations and reductions in the Establishment, but he could not go with Mr. Gladstone all the way to the abolition of the Church; and he therefore remained outside the Ministry, and opposed the bill. Some of the debates in the House of Lords were more interesting than those in the Commons. We have already referred to the eloquence and fervour with which Lord Derby opposed the proposition of the Government. Two speeches delivered from the bench where the bishops sit attracted special attention. One may be said to have marked the close, the other the opening, of a career. One was by Dr. Thirlwall, the Bishop of St. David's, the other by Dr. Magee, Bishop of Peterborough. The Bishop of St. David's spoke in favour of the bill, and addressed himself particularly to the demolition of the superstitious sophism which would lead people to believe that the revenues of a purely human institution like the Irish Church were the sacred possession of Heaven, and that to touch them even with the hand of reforming legislation would be an act of sacrilege. Dr. Thirlwall well maintained on this occasion his noble reputation both as an orator and as a man of intellect. Mr. Mill, in his 'Autobiography,' has given an interesting account of his first hearing Dr. Thirlwall at one of the public discussions of a society in London some forty years before. 'The speaker with whom I was most struck,' Mr. Mill says, 'was Thirlwall, the historian, since Bishop of St. David's, then a Chancery barrister, unknown except by a high reputation for eloquence acquired at the Cambridge union before the era of Austin and Macaulay. His speech was in answer to one of mine. Before he had uttered ten sentences, I set him down as the best speaker I had ever heard, and I have never since heard anyone whom I placed above him.' Dr. Magee, on the other hand, was only beginning his career in the House of Lords. He had been but a short time Bishop of Peterborough. He had been raised to the episcopal bench, it was said, chiefly because Mr. Disraeli when in office believed he saw in him the capacity to make a great Parliamentary debater and champion of the political interests of the Church. Dr. Magee delivered a speech of remarkable fluency, energy, and vividness; a speech which might fairly be classed among the best efforts of the leading orators on either side of the controversy. It was more like the speech of a layman than of a prelate; although indeed it recalled in some of its pugnacious passages the recollection of the fighting bishops of the Middle Ages. If the fate of the Irish Church could have been averted or even postponed by impassioned eloquence, the Bishop of Peterborough might alone have done something to stay the stroke of doom. But the fate of the institution was sealed at

the moment that Mr. Gladstone returned from the general elections in command of a Liberal majority. The House of Lords were prudent enough not to set themselves against the clear declaration of national opinion. Many amendments were introduced and discussed; and some of these led to a controversy between the two Houses of Parliament; but the controversy ended in compromise. There were at one time rumours that the Peers would reject or greatly delay the bill, and Mr. Bright wrote an angry letter on the subject addressed to a Birmingham meeting, in which he warned the House of Lords that by throwing themselves athwart the national course they might meet with 'accidents not pleasant for them to think of.' Such a letter coming from a Cabinet Minister created a good deal of amazement, and was made the subject of some sharp discussion in both Houses of Parliament. It was clear that Mr. Bright did not intend to allow his official position to interfere greatly with the emphatic nature of his utterances on public questions. Shocked and scandalised as some of the Peers professed to be, it is not impossible that the letter did some public service by virtue of its very indiscretion. It may have given timely warning to the House of Lords of the dangerous agitation that would arise if they were to set themselves in deliberate opposition to the will of the vast majority of the people. Rumours too were in circulation about the same time of the determination of the Government to create new Peers in such a number as to make the passing of the bill a certainty. Happily, however, it proved that there was no need for any such intervention on the part of the Ministers and the Crown. The time had gone by when the House of Lords cared to exhibit itself as a mere instrument of resistance to the measures of the representative chamber. The most formidable step the Peers took was to carry on the debate on the second reading of the bill until three o'clock in the morning. The second reading was carried by 179 to 146 votes; and the remainder of the work done by the Lords was only a series of attempts, generally unsuccessful, to obtain here and there a small compromise on some of the less important clauses of the bill. On July 26, 1869, the measure for the disestablishment of the Irish Church received the royal assent.

Meanwhile the wildest excitement prevailed out of doors among the defenders of the State Church. Furious denunciations of the Government resounded from platform and from pulpit. Even in measured and solemn Convocation itself the most impassioned and vehement outcries were heard. One divine spoke of the measure as a great national sin. Another stigmatised it as altogether ungodly, wicked, and abominable. A third called upon the Queen to interfere personally, and exhorted her

rather to jeopardise her crown in the effort than leave the Irish Church to be destroyed before her eyes. A great meeting was held in Exeter Hall, at which Mr. Gladstone was stigmatised as 'a traitor to his Queen, his country, and his God,' and one reverend gentleman described the Government as 'a cabinet of brigands.' At a meeting held in Ireland a Protestant clergyman reminded the pastors of every Protestant church that, sooner than give their churches up to any apostate system, a barrel of gunpowder and a box of matches would send them flying to the winds of heaven. This was, however, only superfluous fury. No one proposed to turn the Protestant clergymen out of their churches. It is not impossible that the fiery ecclesiastic who gave this Guy Fawkes advice was himself ministering in a church which had been taken by force from its Catholic owners. The agitation against the bill produced, however, no sensible effect upon the mind of the country at large. It thundered and blazed for a few days or weeks here and there, and then, after occasional grumblings and sputterings, sank into mere silence.

The Irish Church was therefore disestablished, and it was to a certain extent disendowed. Only to a certain extent. As fortunate as Cleopatra, it contrived to retain enough to purchase what it had made known. The time during which the measure was in progress was turned to good account by the authorities of the Establishment. The bill provided that no new interests should be created in the interval between its passing and the actual disestablishment, which was to take place on January 1, 1871. But while the measure was still under discussion some of the rulers of the Church thought it convenient to create as many new interests as possible. New curates entitled to compensation were made with an astonishing rapidity, and the incomes of some of the clergy were increased with liberal hand. Some sharp controversy was afterwards created by the manner in which the period of grace was thus turned to worldly and profitable account, and there can be little doubt that the effect of the policy of disestablishment was deprived of some of its satisfactory influence on the mind of Ireland by the over-liberal opportunities for compensation allowed to vested interests. It would be impossible, however, not to admit that the difficulties in Mr. Gladstone's way must have warned him that a rigorous dealing with such interests would prove dangerous to the success of his measure. The great fact was that by disestablishing the Irish Church he proclaimed that the policy of religious ascendency was banished for ever from Ireland, and that the reign of equality had begun.

Lord Derby did not long survive the passing of the measure which he had opposed with such fervour and so much pathetic dignity.

His last speech was that which he delivered in the House of Lords against the second reading of the Irish Church Bill on June 17, 1869. 'I am an old man,' he said; 'I have already passed three score years and ten. My official life is entirely closed, my political life is nearly so, and in the course of nature my natural life cannot now be long.' It was sooner ended perhaps than any one expected who heard him deliver that last eloquent protest against a measure of reform which he was unable to resist. He died before the Irish State Church had ceased to live. Doomed as it was, it outlasted its eloquent champion. In the interval between the passing and the practical operation of Mr. Gladstone's bill, on October 23, Lord Derby died at Knowsley, the residence of the Stanleys in Lancashire. His death made no great gap in English politics. He had for some time ceased to assert any really influential place in public affairs. His career had been eminent and distinguished; but its day had long been done. Lord Derby never was a statesman; he was not even a great leader of a party; but he was a splendid figure-head for Conservatism in or out of power. He was, on the whole, a superb specimen of the English political nobleman. Proud of soul, but sweet in temper and genial in manner; dignified as men are who feel instinctively that dignity pertains to them, and therefore never think of how to assert or to maintain it, he was eminently fitted by temperament, by nature, and by fortune for the place it was given him to hold. His parliamentary oratory has already become a tradition. It served its purpose admirably for the time; it showed, as Macaulay said, that Lord Derby possessed the very instinct of parliamentary debate. It was not weighted with the thought which could have secured it a permanent place in political literature, nor had it the imagination which would have lifted it into an atmosphere above the level of Hansard. In Lord Derby's own day the unanimous opinion of both Houses of Parliament would have given him a place among the very foremost of parliamentary orators. Many competent judges went so far as to set him distinctly above all living rivals. Time has not ratified this judgment. It is impossible that the influence of an orator could have faded so soon if he had really been entitled to the praise which many of his contemporaries would freely have rendered to Lord Derby. The charm of his voice and style, his buoyant readiness, his rushing fluency, his rich profusion of words, his happy knack of illustration, allusion, and retort—all these helped to make men believe him a much greater orator than he really was. Something, too, was due to the influence of his position. It seemed a sort of condescension on the part of a great noble that he should consent to be an eloquent debater

also, and to contend in parliamentary sword-play against professional champions like Peel and O'Connell and Brougham. It must count for something in Lord Derby's fame that, while far inferior to any of these men in political knowledge and in mental capacity, he could compare as an orator with each in turn, and—were it but for his own day, were it but while the magic of his presence and his voice was yet a living influence—could be held by so many to have borne without disadvantage the test of comparison.

When the Irish Church had been disposed of, Mr. Gladstone at once directed his energies to the Irish land system. The State Church had been declared by many to be merely a sentimental grievance. The land system of Ireland, if it was to be accounted a grievance at all, must have been acknowledged to be one of a terribly practical character. Ireland is essentially an agricultural country. It has few manufactures, not many large towns. Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Waterford—these are the only towns that could be called large; below these we come to places that in most other countries would be spoken of as villages or hamlets. The majority of the population of Ireland live on the land and by the land. The condition of the Irish tenantry may be painted effectively in a single touch when it is said that they were tenants-at-will. That fact would of itself be almost enough to account for the poverty and the misery of the agricultural classes in Ireland. But there were other conditions, too, which tended the same way. The land of Ireland was divided among a comparatively small number of landlords, and the landlords were, as a rule, strangers, the representatives of a title acquired by conquest. Many of them were habitual absentees, who would as soon have thought of living in Ashantee as in Munster or Connaught. An able writer, Mr. James Godkin, in his 'Land War in Ireland,' endeavours to make the condition of Ireland clear to English readers by asking them to consider what England would be under similar circumstances. 'Imagine,' he says, 'that in consequence of rebellions' (against the Normans) 'the land of England had been confiscated three or four times, after desolating wars and famines, so that all the native proprietors were expelled, and the land was parcelled out to French soldiers and adventurers, on condition that the foreign planters should assist in keeping down the "mere English" by force of arms. Imagine that the English, being crushed by a cruel penal code for a century, were allowed to re-occupy the soil as mere tenants-at-will, under the absolute power of their French landlords. If all this be imagined by English legislators and English writers, they will be better able to understand the Irish land question, and to comprehend the nature of "Irish difficulties" as well as

the justice of feeble, insincere, and baffled statesmen in casting the blame of Irish misery and disorder on the unruly and barbarous nature of Irishmen.' In truth, the Irish agricultural population turned out exactly as any other race of human beings would have done under similar conditions. They held the land which was their only means of living at the mercy of the landlord or his agent. They had no interest in being industrious and improving their land. If they improved the patch of soil they worked on, their rent was almost certain to be raised, or they were turned out of the land without receiving a farthing of compensation for their improvements. Of course there were many excellent landlords, humane and kindly men —men, too, who saw the wisdom of being humane and kind. But in the majority of cases the landlords and the agents held firmly by what seemed to them the right of property—the right to get as high a price for a piece of land as it would fetch in open competition. The demand for land was so great, the need of land was so vital, that men would offer any price for it. Men would offer prices which they must have known they could never pay, which they must have known the land would never enable them to pay. Offering land for hire in Ireland was like offering money on loan to needy spendthrifts; any terms would be snatched at by the desperate borrower to-day, no matter what was to happen to-morrow. When the tenant had got hold of his piece of land, he had no idea of cultivating it to the best of his strength and opportunities. Why should he? The moment his holding began to show a better appearance, that moment he might look to having his rent raised, or to being turned out in favour of some competitor who offered higher terms for occupation. Why should he improve? Whenever he was turned out of the land he would have to leave his improvements for the benefit of the landlord or the new comer. He was, therefore, content to scratch the soil instead of really cultivating it. He extracted all he could from it in his short day. He lived from hand to mouth, from hour to hour. The whole system of feudal tenure of land under a master was new to Ireland. It began with Ireland's conquest, and it was identified in the mind of the Irish peasant with Ireland's degradation. Everything was there that could make oppression bitter. The landlord began to be looked upon at last as the tenant's natural enemy. Ribbon societies were formed for the protection of the tenant. The protection afforded was only too often that of terrorism and assassination. The ribbonism of the south and west of Ireland was as strictly the product of the land system of the country as the trades-union outrages in England were the offspring of the unequal and unjust legislation that gave all the power to the master and lent no protection to the workmen. All the while five out of every six English writers and political

speakers were discoursing gravely on the incurable idleness and lawlessness of the Celtic race and the Irish peasant. The law gave the Irish tenant no security for the fruit of his labour, and Englishmen wondered that he was not laborious. The law told him that when he had sown he should not be entitled to reap, and Englishmen were angry that he would not persist in sowing. Imperial legislation showed itself his steadfast enemy, and Englishmen marvelled at his want of respect for the law.

In one province of Ireland indeed a better condition of things existed. Over the greater part of Ulster the tenant-right system prevailed. This system was a custom merely, but it had gradually come to acquire something like the force of law. The principle of tenant-right was that a man should be allowed to remain in undisturbed possession of his holding as long as he paid his rent; that he should be entitled, on giving up the land, to compensation for unexhausted improvements, and that he should be at liberty to sell the 'good-will' of his farm for what it would fetch in the market. The tenant was free to do what a man who has a long lease of any holding may do; he might sell to any bidder of whom his landlord approved the right to enter on the occupancy of the place. Wherever this tenant-right principle prevailed there was industry, there was prosperity; where it did not prevail was the domain of poverty, idleness, discontent and crime. The one demand of the Irish agricultural population everywhere was for some form of fixity of tenure. Let it be sought by legalising the Ulster custom everywhere, or by declaring that men should hold their land as long as they paid a fair rent, to be fixed by authorised and impartial valuation, or by some plan of establishing a peasant proprietary—let the demand be made as it would, there was substantially one demand and one only—security of tenure. The demand was neglected or refused by generations of English statesmen, chiefly because no statesman would take the trouble to distinguish between words and things; between shadowy, pedantic theories and clear, substantial facts. 'Tenant-right,' said Lord Palmerston, amid the cheers of an assembly mainly composed of landlords, 'is landlords' wrong.' Lord Palmerston forgot that the landlord, like every one else in the commonwealth, holds even his dearest rights of property subject to the condition that his assertion of them is not inconsistent with the general weal. The landlord holds his land as the shipowner holds his ship and the railway company its lines of rail; subject to the right of the State to see that the duties of possession are properly fulfilled, and that the ownership is not allowed to become a public danger and a nuisance. Land is, from its very nature, from the fact that it cannot be increased in extent, and that the possession by one man is the exclusion of another—land is the form of

property over which the State would most naturally be expected to reserve a right of ultimate control. Yet English statesmen for generations complacently asserted the impossibility of any legislative interference with the right of the landlord, as if legislation had not again and again interfered with the right of the factory owner, the owner of mines, the possessor of railway shares, the shopkeeper; the right of the master over his apprentice, the mistress in the hire of her maid-of-all-work. Long years before Lord Palmerston talked so decisively of the landlord's right, a man of far more truly Conservative mind than Lord Palmerston had defined in a few sentences the limits of private or corporate rights. In his speech on Fox's East India measure Burke frankly met this difficulty about individual and corporate rights. He was speaking for the moment especially of chartered corporations; but of course a single owner of property can claim no greater right than a company of property-owners. 'It has been said, if you violate this charter, what security has the charter of the bank, in which public credit is so deeply concerned, and even the charter of London, in which the rights of so many subjects are involved? I answer: in the like case they have no security at all; no, no security at all. If the bank should, by every species of mismanagement, fall into a state similar to that of the East India Company, if it should be oppressed with demands it could not answer, engagements which it could not perform, and with bills for which it could not procure payment, no charter should protect such mismanagement from correction, and such public grievances from redress. If the City of London had the means and will of destroying an empire, and of cruelly oppressing and tyrannising over millions of men as good as themselves, the charter of the City of London would prove no sanction to such tyranny and such oppression. Charters are kept when their purposes are maintained; they are violated when the privilege is supported against its end and its object.' If ever there was a creature of law and of authority acting in the place of law, it was the landlordism of Ireland. It was a plantation made by the orders of English sovereigns and governments. It was not a growth of the soil; it was strictly an exotic. It was imposed upon the country and the people. It could not plead in support of any of its alleged rights even that prescriptive title which grows up with the growth of an institution that has held its place during all the ages to which tradition or memory goes back. The landlordism of Ireland was, compared with most European institutions, a thing of the day before yesterday. It was the creation of conquest, the impost of confiscation. It could plead no title whatever to maintain an unlimited right of action in opposition to the welfare of the people on whom it was forced. At least it could claim

no such title when once the time had passed away which insisted that the right of conquest superseded all other human rights, that the tenant, like the slave, had no rights which his master was bound to respect, and that the common weal meant simply the interests and the privileges of the ruling class. The moment the title of the Irish land system came to be fairly examined, it was seen to be full of flaws. It was dependent on conditions that had never been fulfilled. It had not even made the landlord class prosperous. It had not even succeeded, as no doubt some of its founders intended that it should succeed, in colonising the island with English and Scotch settlers. When the famine of 1846 and 1847 had tried the whole system with its gaunt, stern hand, legislation had perforce to interfere with the fancied rights of landlordism, and invent a new judicial machinery for taking from the broken-down owner what he could keep no longer with profit to himself or the country. For generations the land tenure system of Ireland had been the subject of parliamentary debate and parliamentary inquiry. The Devon Commission had made ample investigation of its principles and its operation. Mr. Sharman Crawford had in vain devoted an honest life to the advocacy of tenant-right. Mr. Cardwell, Mr. Chichester Fortescue, Lord Naas had introduced measures trying more or less feebly to deal with Irish land tenure. Nothing came of all this. The supposed right of the landlord stopped the way. The one simple demand of the occasion was, as we have shown, security of tenure, and it was an article of faith with English statesmanship until Mr. Gladstone's time that security for the tenant was confiscation for the landlord.

Mr. Gladstone came into power full of genuine reforming energy and without the slightest faith in the economic wisdom of our ancestors. In a speech delivered by him during his electioneering campaign in Lancashire, he had declared that the Irish upas-tree had three great branches: the State Church, the Land Tenure system, and the System of Education, and that he meant to hew them all down if he could. His figure of speech met with a good deal of contemptuous literary criticism; but it expressed a very resolute purpose. On February 15, 1870, Mr. Gladstone introduced his Irish Land Bill into the House of Commons. The measure was one of far greater importance as regarded its principles than it proved to be in its practical operation. In plain words, what it did was to recognise the fact that the whole system of land tenure in Ireland, so far as it was the creature of law, was based upon a wrong principle. Mr. Gladstone's measure overthrew once for all the doctrine of the landlord's absolute and unlimited right. It recognised a certain property or partnership of the tenant in the land which he tilled. Mr. Gladstone

took the Ulster tenant-right as he found it, and made it a legal institution. In places where the Ulster practice, or something analogous to it, did not exist, he threw upon the landlord the burden of proof as regarded the right of eviction. The tenant disturbed in the possession of his land could claim compensation for improvements, and the bill reversed the existing assumption of the law by presuming all improvements to be the property of the tenant, and leaving it to the landlord, if he could, to prove the contrary. The bill established a special judicial machinery for carrying out its provisions. It allowed the tribunals thus instituted to take into consideration not merely the strict legal conditions of each case, but also any circumstances that might affect the claim of the tenant as a matter of equity. Mr. Gladstone's great object was to bring about a state of things by virtue of which a tenant should not be dispossessed of his holding so long as he continued to pay his rent, and should in any case be entitled to full compensation for any substantial improvements which his energy or his capital might have effected. The bill met on the whole with a cordial reception from the Irish members of Parliament, although some of its clauses were regarded with a doubt and disfavour which subsequent events, we believe, showed to be well-founded. Mr. Gladstone allowed landlords, under certain conditions, to contract themselves out of the provisions of the bill, and these conditions were so largely availed of in some parts of Ireland, that there were more evictions after the bill had become law than before it had yet been thought of. On this ground the measure was actually opposed by a small number of the popular representatives of Ireland. The general opinion, however, then and since was, that the bill was of inestimable value to Ireland in the mere fact that it completely upset the fundamental principle on which legislation had always previously dealt with Irish land tenure. It recognised a certain ownership on the part of the tenant as well as that of the landlord. The new principle thus introduced might well be denounced as revolutionary by certain startled Irish landlords. It put an end to the reign of the landlord's absolute power; it reduced the landlord to the level of every other proprietor, of every other man in the country who had anything to sell or to hire. It recognised the palpable fact that there are certain conditions which make the ownership of land a more responsible possession than the ownership of property which admits of limitless expansion. The existing system of legislation had been founded not merely on injustice but on untruth. It had denied the presence of conditions which were as certain and as palpable as the substance of the land itself. Therefore the new legislation might in one sense have well been called revolutionary. It decided once for all against

Lord Palmerston's famous dogma, and declared that tenant-right was not landlord's wrong. That was in itself a revolution.

The bill passed without substantial alteration. The Conservatives as a party did not vote against the second reading. A division was forced on, but only eleven members voted against the motion that the bill be read a second time, and of these only two or three belonged to the Conservative party, and only one, Mr. Henley, was of any mark among Conservatives. The small minority was chiefly made up of Irish members, who thought the bill inefficient and unsatisfactory. Long discussions in committee followed, but the only serious attempt made to interfere with the actual principle of the measure, an attempt embodied in an amendment moved by Mr. Disraeli, was defeated by a majority of more than seventy votes. The bill was read a third time in the Commons on May 30. A debate of three nights took place in the House of Lords on the motion for the second reading, and many nights of discussion were occupied in committee. On August 1, 1870, the bill received the royal assent. The second branch of the upas-tree had been hewn down; but the woodman's axe had yet to be laid to a branch of tougher fibre, well calculated to turn the edge of even the best weapon, and to jar the strongest arm that wielded it. Mr. Gladstone had dealt with Church and land; he had yet to deal with university education. He had gone with Irish ideas thus far.

CHAPTER LIX.

'REFORMATION IN A FLOOD.'

On June 10, 1870, men's minds were suddenly turned away from thought of political controversy by a melancholy announcement in the morning papers. The Irish Land Bill, the question of national education, the curiously ominous look of affairs in France, where the Emperor had just been obtaining by means of the *plebiscite* 'a new guarantee of order and liberty;' the terrible story of the capture and massacre of young English tourists by Greek brigands in the neighbourhood of Marathon; these and many other exciting topics were forgotten for the hour, and the thoughts of millions were suddenly drawn away to a country house near the Gad's Hill of Shakespere, on the road to Rochester, where the most popular author of his day was lying dead. On the evening of June 8, Mr. Dickens became suddenly seized with paralysis. He fell into an un-

conscious state and continued so until his death, the evening after. The news was sent over the country on the 10th, and brought a pang as of personal sorrow into almost every home. Dickens was not of an age to die; he had scarcely passed his prime. Born early in February 1812, he had not gone far into his fifty-ninth year. In another part of this work an attempt has been made to do justice to Dickens as a novelist; here it is only necessary to record the historical fact of his death and of the deep impression that it made. No author of our time came near him in popularity; perhaps no English author ever was so popular during his own life. To an immense number of men and women in these countries, Dickens stood for literature; to not a few his cheery teaching was sufficient as philosophy and even as religion. Soon after his death, as might have been expected, a certain reaction took place, and for a while it became the fashion to smile quietly at Dickens' teaching and his influence. That mood too will have its day and will pass. It may be safely predicted that Dickens will be found to have made a firm place in English literature, although that place will probably not be so high as his admirers would once have claimed for him. Londoners were familiar with Dickens' personal appearance as well as with his writings, and certain London streets did not seem quite the same when his striking face and energetic movements could be seen there no more. It is likely that Dickens overworked his exuberant vital energy, his superb resources of physical health and animal spirits. In work and play, in writing and in exercising, he was unsparing of his powers. Like the lavish youth with the full purse in 'Gil Blas,' he appeared to believe that his stock could never be spent. Men who were early companions of his, and who had not half his vital power, outlived him many years. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, although his own desire was to be laid quietly in Rochester churchyard. It was held that the national cemetery claimed him. We cannot help thinking it a pity the claim was made. All true admirers of Scott must be glad that he rests in his dear and congenial Dryburgh; most of the admirers of Dickens would have been better pleased to think that he lay beneath the green turf of the ancient churchyard, in venerable and storied Rochester, amid the scenes that he loved and taught so many others to love.

Nothing in modern English history is like the rush of the extraordinary years of reforming energy on which the new Administration had now entered. Mr. Gladstone's Government had to grapple with five or six great questions of reform, any one of which might have seemed enough to engage the whole attention of an ordinary Administration. The new Prime Minister had pledged himself to abolish the State Church in Ire-

land and to reform the Irish Land Tenure system. He had made up his mind to put an end to the purchase of commissions in the army. Recent events and experiences had convinced him that it was necessary to introduce the system of voting by ballot. He accepted for his Government the responsibility of originating a complete scheme of National Education. Meanwhile, there were many questions of the highest importance in foreign policy waiting for solution. The American Government did what every cool and well-informer observer must have known they would do; they pressed for a settlement of the claims arising out of the damage done by the *Alabama* and other Southern cruisers which had been built in English dockyards and had sailed from English ports. In the mid career of the Government the war broke out between France and Prussia. Russia took advantage of the opportunity to insist that the Treaty of Paris must be altered by the cancelling of the clause which 'formally and in perpetuity' refused to every Power the right of having a fleet in the Black Sea. Each of these questions was of capital importance; each might have involved the country in war. It required no common energy and strength of character to keep closely to the work of domestic reform, amid such exciting discussions in foreign policy all the while, and with the war-trumpet ringing for a long time in the ears of England.

Mr. Forster's Education Bill may be said to have been run side by side with the Irish Land Bill. The Government undertook a great and a much-needed work when it set about establishing a national system of elementary education. The manner in which England had neglected the education of her poor children had long been a reproach to her civilisation. She was behind every other great country in the world; she was behind most countries that in nowise professed to be great. Prussia and nearly all the German countries were centuries in advance of her; so were some, if not actually all, of the American States. We have already shown in these pages, by what pitiful patchwork of compromises and make-shift expedients England had been trying to put together something like a plan for the instruction of the children of the poor. Private charity was eked out in a parsimonious and miserable manner by a scanty dole from the State; and as a matter of course, where the direst poverty prevailed, and naturally brought the extremest need for assistance to education, there the wants of the place were least efficiently supplied. For years the statesmanship of England had been kept from any serious attempt to grapple with the evil by the doctrine that popular education ought not to be the business of a Government. The idea prevailed that education conducted by the State would be something un-English; something which might do very well for Germans and Americans and other such people,

but which was entirely unsuited to the manly independence of the true Briton. It therefore came about that more than two-thirds of the children of the country were absolutely without instruction. One of the first great tasks which Mr. Gladstone's Government undertook, was to reform this condition of things, and to provide England for the first time in her history with a system of National Education. On February 17, 1870, Mr. Forster introduced a bill, having for its object to provide for public elementary education in England and Wales. The basis of the measure was very simple, but also very comprehensive. Mr. Forster proposed to establish a system of School Boards in England and Wales; and to give to each board the power to frame bye-laws compelling the attendance of all children, from five to twelve years of age, within the school district. The Government did not see their way to a system of direct and universal compulsion. They therefore fell back on a compromise, by leaving the power to compel in the hands of the local authorities. Existing schools were, in many instances, to be adopted by the bill, and to receive Government aid, on condition that they possessed a certain amount of efficiency in education, that they submitted themselves to the examination of an undenominational inspector, and that they admitted a conscience clause as part of their regulations. The funds were to be procured, partly by local rate, partly by grants from the Treasury, and partly by the fees paid in the paying schools. There were of course to be free schools provided, where the poverty of the population was such as, in the opinion of the local authorities, to render gratuitous instruction indispensable.

The bill at first was favourably received. But the general harmony of opinion did not last long. The task proved to be one of the most difficult that the Government could have undertaken. The whole body of the English and Welsh Nonconformists soon declared themselves in strong hostility to some of the bill's provisions. Mr. Forster found, when he came to examine into the condition of the machinery of education in England, that there was already a system of schools existing under the charge of religious bodies of various kinds: the State Church, and the Roman Catholic Church, and other authorities. These he proposed to adopt as far as possible into his scheme; to affiliate them, as it were, to the Governmental system of education. But he had to make some concession to the religious principles on which such schools were founded. He could not by any stroke of authority undertake to change them all into secular schools. He therefore proposed to meet the difficulty by adopting regulations compelling every school of this kind which obtained Government aid or recognition to accept a conscience clause by means of which the religious convictions of parents and children should be scru-

pulously regarded in the instruction given during the regular school hours. On this point the Nonconformists as a body broke away from the Government. They laid down the broad principle that no State aid whatever should be given to any schools but those which were conducted on strictly secular and undenominational principles. It ought to be superfluous to say that the Nonconformists did not object to the religious instruction of children. It ought not to be supposed for a moment that they attached less importance to religious instruction than any other body of persons. Their principle was that public money, the contributions of citizens of all shades of belief, ought only to be given for such teaching as the common opinion of the country was agreed upon. The contribution of the Jew, they argued, ought not to be exacted in order to teach Christianity; the Protestant ratepayer ought not to be compelled to pay for the instruction of Roman Catholic children in the tenets of their faith; the Irish Catholic in London or Birmingham ought not to be called upon to pay in any way for the teaching of distinctively Protestant doctrine.

Therefore, they said, let us at any cost establish a strictly national and secular system in our public elementary schools; let us teach there what we are all agreed upon; and let us leave the duty of teaching religion to the ministers of religion, and to the parents of the children. About the truths of arithmetic and geography, about spelling and writing, we are all agreed; let our common contributions be given to common instruction, and let each denomination provide in its own way for the religious training of its young people. This way of looking at the question left out of notice one most important element in the controversy: the existence of large bodies of citizens who conscientiously objected to any school teaching which was divorced from religious instruction, and who did not believe that there could be any education in the true sense without the influence of religion accompanying and inspiring it. We shall not here discuss the relative worth of these two opposing and irreconcileable theories of public education. The fact that they existed, made it well-nigh impossible for the Government to satisfy the demands of the Nonconformists. Mr. Forster could not admit the principle for which they contended. He could not say that it would be a fair and equal plan to offer secular education, and that alone, to all bodies of the community; for he was well aware that there were such bodies who were conscientiously opposed to what was called secular education, and who could not agree to accept it. He therefore acknowledged existing and very palpable facts, and endeavoured to establish a system which should satisfy the consciences of all the denominations. But the Nonconformists would not meet him on this ground. They set up their shibboleth of undenominational education; they made

a fetish of their theory of State aid; and they fought Mr. Forster long, and ably and bitterly. The Liberal minister was compelled to accept more than once the aid of the Conservative party; for that party as a whole adopted the principle which insisted on religious instruction in every system of national education. It more than once happened therefore, that Mr. Forster and Mr. Gladstone found themselves appealing to the help of Conservatives and of Roman Catholics against that dissenting body of Englishmen who were usually the main support of the Liberal party. It happened too, very unfortunately, that at this time Mr. Bright's health had so far given way as to compel him to seek complete rest from Parliamentary duties. His presence and his influence with the Nonconformists might perhaps have tended to moderate their course of action, and to reconcile them to the policy of the Government even on the subject of national education; but his voice was silent then, and for long after. The split between the Government and the Nonconformists became something like a complete severance. Many angry and bitter words were spoken in the House of Commons on both sides. On one occasion, there was an almost absolute declaration on the part of Mr. Gladstone and of Mr. Miall, a leading Nonconformist, that they had parted company for ever. The Education Bill was nevertheless a great success. The School Boards became really valuable and powerful institutions, and the principle of the cumulative vote was tested for the first time in their elections. When School Boards were first established in the great cities, their novelty and the evident importance of the work they had to do attracted to them some of the men of most commanding intellect and position. The London School Board had as its chairman, for instance, Lord Lawrence, the great Indian statesman, lately a Viceroy, and for one of its leading members Professor Huxley. An important peculiarity of the School Boards too, was the fact, that they admitted women to the privileges of membership; and this admission was largely availed of. Women voted, proposed amendments, sat on committees, and in every way took their part of the duties of citizenship in the business of national education. When the novelty of the system wore off, some of the more eminent men gradually fell out of the work, but the School Boards never failed to maintain a high and useful standard of membership. They began and continued to be strictly representative institutions. From the peer to the working man, from Evangelical Churchman to Catholic; from Nonconformist to Rationalist; from old-fashioned middle-class Paterfamilias to eager young woman shrilly representing the rights of her sex, they became a mirror of English public and business life. Most of their work even still remains to be done. The school system of the country needs many improvements

and many relaxations, probably, before it can be pronounced to be in fair working order. Its existence has in many parts of England brought thus far not peace but a sword. The struggle between the conscientious belief of one class of persons and the political dogma of another is still going on. Many attempts were made to induce the Government to go as far as direct compulsory education, and much dissatisfaction was expressed at the refusal of ministers to venture on the adoption of such a principle. It is therefore not unreasonable to say that the national system of education has hardly yet had a fair and full trial. But so far as it has gone, there can be no doubt of the success it has achieved. No man exists who would, if he could, see England return to the condition of things which prevailed before the days of the Gladstone administration. But it must be owned that the Gladstone administration was weakened and not strengthened by its education scheme. One of the first symptoms of coming danger to Mr. Gladstone's Government was found in the estrangement of the English Nonconformists. They clung to their adopted principle with a genuine Puritan pertinacity. They admitted no respect of persons where that was concerned. Honest, conscientious and narrow, they were ready to sacrifice any party and any minister, rather than tolerate concession or compromise.

The Government were a little unfortunate too as regarded another great reform: that of the organisation of the army. Mr. Cardwell, the War Minister, brought forward a scheme for the reconstruction of the army, by combining under one system of discipline the regular troops, the militia, the volunteers, and the reserve. One most important part of the scheme was, the abolition of the purchase system for officers' commissions, and the substitution of promotion according to merit. Except in certain regiments, and in certain branches of the service outside England itself, the rule was, that an officer obtained his commission by purchase. Promotion was got in the same way. An officer bought a step up in the service. A commission was a vested interest; a personal property. The owner had paid so much for it, and he expected to get so much for it when he thought fit to sell it. The regulation price recognised by law and the Horse Guards was not by any means the actual price of the commission. It became worth much more to the holder, and of course he expected to get its real price, not its regulation, or nominal and imaginary price. The regulation price was to the real price what the cost of the ticket bought at the door of an Italian theatre is to the sum which has to be paid inside for a seat from which to see the play. This anomalous and extraordinary system had grown up with the growth of the English army, until it seemed in the eyes of many an essential condition of the army's existence. It

found defenders almost everywhere. Because the natural courage, energy and fighting power of Englishmen, Irishmen and Scotchmen had made a good army in spite of this unlucky practice, because the army did not actually collapse or wither away under its influence, many men were convinced that the army could not get on without it. The abolition of the purchase system had been advocated by generations of reformers without much success. For years, a stout old soldier, Sir De Lacy Evans, had made an annual motion on the subject which was regarded by not a few as merely one of the necessary bores of Parliamentary life. More lately Mr. Trevelyan had taken up the cause with vivacity, spirit, and good effect. Lord Stanley had always supported the proposed reform, as he had supported the system of open competition for appointments in the Civil Service. But the question did not become really pressing and practical until Mr. Gladstone, on his accession to power, resolved to include it in his list of reforms. Of course Mr. Cardwell's proposition was bitterly and pertinaciously opposed. The principle of army purchase was part of a system in which large numbers of the most influential class had a vested interest. It was part of the aristocratic principle. To admit men to commissions in the army by pure merit and by mere competition would be to deprive the service of its specially aristocratic character. Few of those who opposed the reform on this ground were actually conscious that they were fighting merely for the maintenance of a class privilege and a selfish advantage. They had schooled themselves into the conviction that the aristocratic system was the only principle of existence for an English army; that a system of open promotion by merit would be too French or too American, or something of the kind; that it would fill the higher places in the service with persons of no rank and of vulgar habits; and they had worked themselves into the belief that in resisting Mr. Cardwell's measure they were performing a patriotic duty. A large number of the Conservative party set themselves, therefore, not merely to oppose but to obstruct the bill. They proposed all manner of amendments, and raised all manner of discussions, in which the same arguments were repeated over and over again by the same speakers in almost the same words. Men who had never before displayed the slightest interest in the saving of the public money were now clamorous opponents of the bill on the ground that the abolition of purchase would render necessary the outlay of a large sum for compensation to officers thus deprived of their vested interests. This outlay the Liberal Government, usually censured by their opponents on the ground of their pinching parsimony, were quite willing to meet. Mr. Cardwell was prepared to make provision for it. Economy, however, became suddenly a weapon in the hands of some of the Conservatives. The

session was going on, and there seemed little prospect of the Opposition being discouraged or slackening in their energy. The Government began to see that it would be impossible to carry through the vast and complicated scheme of army reorganisation which they had introduced; and Mr. Gladstone was resolved that the system of purchase must come to an end. It was thought expedient at last, and while the bill was still fighting its way through committee, to abandon a great part of the measure and persevere for the present only with those clauses which related to the abolition of the system of purchase. Under these conditions the bill passed its third reading in the Commons on July 3, 1871, not without a stout resistance at the last and not by a very overwhelming majority. This condition of things gave the majority in the House of Lords courage to oppose the scheme. A meeting of Conservative peers was held, and it was resolved that the Duke of Richmond should offer an amendment to the motion for the second reading of the army purchase bill. The Duke of Richmond was exactly the sort of man that a party under such conditions would agree upon as the proper person to move an amendment. He was an entirely respectable and safe politician; a man of great influence so far as dignity and territorial position were concerned; a seemingly moderate Tory who showed nothing openly of the mere partisan and yet was always ready to serve his party. When the motion for the second reading came on, the Duke of Richmond moved an amendment declaring that the House of Lords was unwilling to agree to the motion until a comprehensive and complete scheme of army reorganisation should have been laid before it. This amendment was cleverly constructed. It did not pledge the House of Lords to reject the bill; it did not directly oppose the second reading; it merely said that before passing the second reading, the House was anxious to know more fully the plans of the Government for the general reorganisation of the army. The Government had brought in a scheme of vast reorganisation, and had then withdrawn nearly all of it, with the avowed intention of introducing it again at a more convenient opportunity. It looked reasonable enough therefore that the House of Lords should hesitate about abandoning the system of purchase before knowing exactly what the Government proposed to do as a supplement and consequence of so important a measure. But of course the object of the House of Lords was not to obtain further information; it was simply to get rid of the bill for the present. The amendment of the Duke of Richmond was adopted.

Then Mr. Gladstone took a course which became the subject of keen and embittered controversy. Purchase in the army was permitted only by Royal warrant. The whole system was the creation of Royal regulation. The House of Commons had pronounced against the system.

The House of Lords had not pronounced in favour of it. The House of Lords had not rejected the measure of the Government, but only expressed a wish for delay and for further information. Delay however would have been fatal to the measure for that session. Mr. Gladstone therefore devised a way for checkmating what he knew to be the design of the House of Lords. It was an ingenious plan; it was almost an audacious plan; it took the listener's breath away to hear of it. Mr. Gladstone announced that as the system of purchase was the creation of Royal regulation, he had advised the Queen to take the decisive step of cancelling the Royal warrant which made purchase legal. A new Royal warrant was therefore immediately issued, declaring that, on and after November 1 following, all regulations made by Her Majesty or any of her predecessors regulating or fixing the prices at which commissions might be bought, or in any way authorising the purchase or sale of such commissions should be cancelled. As far as regarded purchase therefore, the controversy came suddenly to an end. The House of Lords had practically nothing to discuss. All that was left of the Government scheme on which the Peers could have anything to say was that part of the bill which provided compensation for those whom the abolition of the system of purchase would deprive of certain vested interests. For the Lords to reject the bill as it now stood would merely be to say that such officers should have no compensation. The Lords were, to use a homely expression, sold. To adopt a phrase which would have been good English once, and would not have been too strong to illustrate their own views of what had happened, they were 'bubbled.' Astonishment fell upon the minds of most who heard Mr. Gladstone's determination. After a moment of bewilderment it was received with a wild outburst of Liberal exultation. It was felt to be a splendid party triumph. The House of Lords had been completely foiled. The tables had been turned on the Peers. They were as utterly baffled as Sir Giles Overreach in Massinger's play, when pulling out the document on which he is to rely, he finds it only 'a fair skin of parchment,' with 'neither wax nor words.' 'What prodigy is this? I am o'erwhelmed with wonder,' an astounded peer might have exclaimed; 'what subtle spirit hath razed out the inscription?' Nothing was left for the House of Lords but to pass the bill as quickly as possible, coupling its passing, however, with a resolution announcing that it was passed only in order to secure to officers of the army the compensation they were entitled to receive, and censuring the Government for having attained, 'by the exercise of the prerogative and without the aid of Parliament,' the principal object which they contemplated in the bill.

The House of Lords was then completely defeated. The system of

purchase in the army was abolished by one sudden and clever stroke. The Government were victorious over their opponents. Yet the hearts of many sincere Liberals sank within them as they heard the announcement of the triumph. Mr. Disraeli condemned in the strongest terms the sudden exercise of the prerogative of the Crown to help the Ministry out of a difficulty; and many a man of mark and influence on the Liberal benches felt that there was good ground for the strictures of the leader of the Opposition. Mr. Fawcett in particular condemned the act of the Government. He insisted that if it had been done by a Tory minister it would have been passionately denounced by Mr. Gladstone amid the plaudits of the whole Liberal party. Mr. Fawcett was a man who occupied a remarkable position in the House of Commons. In his early manhood he met with an accident which entirely destroyed the sight of his eyes. He made the noble resolve that he would nevertheless follow unflinching the career he had previously mapped out for himself, and would not allow the terrible calamity he had suffered to drive him from the active life of the political world. His tastes were for politics and political economy. He published a manual of political economy; he wrote largely on the subject in reviews and magazines; he was elected Professor of the science in his own university, Cambridge. He was in politics as well as in economics a pupil of Mr. Mill; and with the encouragement and support of Mr. Mill he became a candidate for a seat in Parliament. He was a Liberal of the most decided tone; but he was determined to hold himself independent of party. He stood for Southwark against Mr. Layard in 1857, and was defeated; he contested Cambridge and Brighton at subsequent elections, and at last in 1865 he was successful at Brighton. He was not long in the House of Commons before it was acknowledged that his political career was likely to be something of a new force in Parliament. A remarkably powerful reasoner, he was capable notwithstanding his infirmity of making a long speech full of figures and of statistical calculations. His memory was fortunately so quick and powerful as to enable him easily to dispense with all the appliances which even well-trained speakers commonly have to depend upon when they enter into statistical controversy. In Parliament he held faithfully to the purpose with which he had entered it, and was a thorough Liberal in principles, but absolutely independent of the expedients and sometimes of the mere discipline of party. If he believed that the Liberal ministers were going wrong, he censured them as freely as though they were his political opponents. On this occasion he felt strongly about the course Mr. Gladstone had taken, and he expressed himself in language of unmeasured condemnation. It seems hard to understand how any independent man could have come to any other conclusion. The exercise of

the Royal prerogative was undoubtedly legal. Much time was wasted in testifying to its legality. The question in dispute was whether its sudden introduction in such a manner was a proper act on the part of the Government; whether it was right to cut short by virtue of the Queen's prerogative a debate which had previously been carried on without the slightest intimation that the controversy was to be settled in any other way than that of the ordinary Parliamentary procedure. There seems to be only one reasonable answer to this question. The course taken by Mr. Gladstone was unusual, unexpected, unsustained by any precedent; it was a mere surprise; it was not fair to the House of Lords; it was not worthy of the occasion, or the ministry, or the Liberal principles they professed. Great stress was laid upon an opinion which was obtained from Sir Roundell Palmer in justification of the action of the Government. But Sir Roundell Palmer merely gave it as his opinion that the issuing of the warrant cancelling purchase was within the constitutional power of the Crown. On that subject there could be no reasonable doubt. But that was not the question which people were discussing so eagerly. They were asking whether it was fair to begin a measure of reform on the ordinary principles of Parliamentary procedure, and suddenly to bring it to a close by the unexpected intervention of the Royal prerogative. On this question, the only one really at issue, Sir Roundell Palmer's letter was a condemnation, not a justification, of the course taken by the Government. 'I should have been glad,' Sir Roundell Palmer wrote to Mr. Cardwell, 'if it had been generally and clearly understood from the beginning that, subject to the sense of Parliament being ascertained with reference to the point of compensation, the form of procedure would be that which was eventually adopted, because it is certainly an evil that the adoption of one constitutional mode of procedure rather than another should appear to arise from an adverse vote of the House of Lords.'

The introduction of the prerogative in this curious way did much to damage the influence of Mr. Gladstone's Government. Everyone in the end came to approve of the principle of promotion in the army by merit, and the abolition of the anomalous system of purchase. But this great reform could at most have been delayed for only a single session by the House of Lords. It would have been carried, as the ballot was carried, the moment it was sent up a second time from the representative chamber. It is not even certain that the House of Lords, if firmly met, would have carried their opposition long enough to delay the measure by a single session. In any case the time lost would not have counted for much; better by far to have waited another session than to have carried the point at once by a stroke of policy which seemed impatient, petulant, and

even unfair. It is evident that among the independent men of his own party, Mr. Gladstone suffered discredit by the manner in which he swept the purchase system away, and 'bade his will avouch it.' Among the many influences already combining to weaken his authority, the impression produced by this stroke of policy was not the least powerful.

The Ballot Bill was not carried without a struggle. It was introduced by Mr. Forster on February 20, 1871, and was a measure embodying some remarkable changes. Its principal object was of course the introduction of the system of secret voting. This Mr. Forster proposed to do by compelling each voter to use only an official voting-paper which he was to obtain at the polling-place and there alone. Entering the polling-place, the voter was to go to the official in charge, and mention his name and his place of residence. The official, having ascertained that he was properly on the register, would hand him a stamped paper on which to inscribe his vote. The voter was to take the paper into a separate compartment and there privately mark a cross opposite the printed name of the candidate for whom he desired to record his vote. He was then to fold up the paper in such a manner as to prevent the mark from being seen, and in the presence of the official, drop it into the urn for containing the votes. By this plan Mr. Forster proposed not only to obtain secrecy but also to prevent personation. The Bill likewise undertook to abolish the old practice of nominating candidates publicly by speeches at the hustings. Instead of a public nomination it was intended that the candidates should be nominated by means of a paper containing the names of a proposer and seconder and eight assentors, all of whom must be registered voters. This paper being handed to the returning officer would constitute a nomination. Thus was abolished one of the most characteristic and time-dishonoured peculiarities of electioneering. Every humorous writer, every satirist with pencil or pen, from Hogarth to Dickens, had made merry with the scenes of the nomination day. No ceremonial could be at once more useless and more mischievous. In England the candidates were proposed and seconded in face of each other on a public platform in some open street or market-place in the presence of a vast tumultuous crowd, three-fourths of whom were generally drunk and all of whom were inflamed by the passion of a furious partianship. Fortunate indeed was the orator whose speech was anything more than dumb show. The Conservative part of the crowd usually made it a point of honour not to listen to the Liberal candidate or allow him to be heard; the Liberal partisans in the street were equally resolute to drown the eloquence of the Tory candidate. Brass bands and drums not unusually accompanied the efforts of the speakers to make themselves heard. Brickbats, dead cats,

and rotten eggs came flying like bewildering meteors around the ears of the rival politicians on the hustings. The crowds generally enlivened the time by a series of faction fights among themselves. Anything more grotesque, more absurd, more outrageous it would be impossible to imagine. The Bill introduced by Mr. Forster would have deserved the support of all rational beings, if it proposed no greater reform than simply the abolition of this abominable system. But the ballot had long become an indispensable necessity. Bribery, corruption, intimidation, were the monstrous outcome of the system of open voting. Yet for long years no reform had seemed more unlikely than the adoption of the ballot. In Mr. Grote's days there used to be an annual debate on the motion in favour of the ballot, and Mr. Grote generally found himself supported by a very respectable minority, and by some speakers of great influence. Still his proposal was even then regarded by Parliament and the public in general rather as a crotchet than as a practical scheme. In 'The Song of the Box' Thomas Moore made easy ridicule of Grote and his ballot.

> And oh, when at last even this greatest of Grotes
> Must bend to the power that at every door knocks,
> May he drop in the urn like his own silent votes,
> And the tomb of his rest be a large ballot-box.

Lord Palmerston made precisely the same joke years after about Mr. Henry Berkeley and his annual motion for the adoption of the ballot. He expressed a hope that when the inevitable hour came for Mr. Berkeley to quit the scene of his mortal labours, his tomb might be made in the likeness of a ballot-box. Lord Palmerston evidently was not acquainted with Moore's lines about Mr. Grote, and was under the impression that he was making an original joke. In Mr. Berkeley's hands, the ballot debate became less important than it had been with Mr. Grote. On one remarkable occasion indeed, Mr. Berkeley contrived to carry a sort of snap vote against the Government. The division was taken unexpectedly in a very thin house, and 86 voted for the ballot and 80 against it. But nothing came of this, and the whole question seemed at one time in a fair way to be classed with Mr. Spooner's motion for the withdrawal of the Maynooth Grant or Mr. Newdegate's appeal for the inspection of convents. Lord Palmerston used to argue complacently that the franchise was not a right but a trust; that the trust was exercised on behalf of the community in general, and that the voter was bound to discharge his duty in public so that those for whom he acted should know that he was acting fairly. This way of treating the question held out a temptation to long and futile controversy as to whether the franchise was or was not the right of a free man, and in what we may call the metaphysics of the

subject the really practical object of the discussion became lost. Lord Palmerston's description of the franchise did not in the slightest degree affect the argument in favour of the ballot. If the franchise was a trust and only a trust, there was none the less necessity that the trustee should be so protected as to enable him to discharge his trust conscientiously and properly. The objection to the open vote was that in a vast number of instances the voter could not safely vote according to his conscience and his convictions. If he was a tenant he was in terror of his landlord; if he was a workman he was afraid of his employer; if he was a small shopkeeper in a country town he was in dread of offending some wealthy customer; if he was a timid man he shrank from exposing himself to the violence of a mob. In many cases a man giving a conscientious vote would have had to do so with the certainty that he was bringing ruin upon himself and his family. In Ireland the conflicting power of the landlord and of the crowd made the vote a mere sham. A man in many places dared not vote but as the landlord bade him. Sometimes, when he thought to secure his safety by pleasing the landlord, he ran serious risk by offending the crowd who supported the popular candidate. Voters were dragged to the poll like slaves or prisoners by the landlord and his agents. It was something worse than ridiculous to tell the House of Commons and the public that it was necessary such a system should be kept up because it enabled everybody to see that the voter properly discharged his trust. Yet this argument about the trust and the need of publicity was almost the only piece of reasoning which for many years Lord Palmerston thought it worth his while to offer to the House of Commons. Mr. Mill, who had begun by advocating the ballot, became an opponent of the system, chiefly on the ground that it was unmanly to conceal one's vote. This way of arguing the question only furnished one other illustration of the generous weakness which impaired the effect of much of Mr. Mill's political and social philosophy: the tendency to construct systems based on what Burke called the heroic virtues; the belief that human affairs can be regulated on the assumption that all men can not only become heroic, but that they can be heroic always. It would be a nobler world indeed if in the giving of our votes as in everything else we could all make up our minds to do right and to defy the consequences. It would be a far finer sight for the moralist or the philosopher to see a concourse of Irish tenants going openly to the poll to vote against their landlords, and calmly accepting eviction as a consequence, than to see the same men screened from the penalty of their patriotic conduct by the mechanical protection of the ballot. The small shopkeeper who offended his most influential customer in the cause of

what he believed to be the right, would be a nobler subject for contemplation than the small shopkeeper enabled to do as he thought right without any risk or loss. But an electoral system constructed on these lofty principles would be sure to turn out exactly as the open voting system proved to be: a source of almost boundless demoralisation. It is curious to note that in one of the very speeches in which he condemned the ballot on this higher ground, Mr. Mill actually quoted with approval that sentence of profound practical philosophy in which Burke declared that 'the system which lays its foundations in rare and heroic virtues will be sure to have its superstructure in the basest profligacy and corruption.'

A change, however, suddenly took place in English public feeling. The gross and growing profligacy and violence which disgraced every election began to make men feel that something must be done to get rid of such hideous abuses. Mr. Bright had always been an earnest advocate of the ballot system; and partly no doubt under his influence, and partly by the teaching of experience and observation, Mr. Gladstone became a convert to the same opinion. In 1869 a committee of the House of Commons was appointed on the motion of Mr. Bruce, the Home Secretary, to enquire into the manner of conducting parliamentary and municipal elections. Lord Hartington was chairman of the committee. Its report was on the whole decidedly in favour of the principle of secret voting. Public opinion came round in a moment. Not many years had passed since the very words 'secret voting' used to be considered enough to stigmatise the ballot, and to make all true men disclaim any approval of it. Now under the impulse of that marvellous breath of reforming energy which was scattering so many ancient traditions the repugnance to the secret vote seemed to have disappeared. We are speaking now of the public out of doors; for a great many members of both Houses of Parliament were still unconverted. Mr. Forster's Bill was stoutly resisted by the Conservatives. It was not merely resisted in the ordinary way; its progress was delayed by that practice of talking against time which has more recently become famous under the name of obstruction. A good many Liberal members liked the ballot in their hearts little better than the Tories did. The Bill contained a wise and just proposal for throwing the legitimate expenses of elections on the public rates. This was rejected in committee by a large majority. A similar proposal, it may be stated, was introduced again and again in more or less differing forms during the progress of the Ballot Bills, and it was invariably rejected. The majority of the House of Commons is composed of rich men; the majority, it is not unfair to say, is composed also of men who are not recommended to their constituencies by great intellect or distinguished public services.

There will always therefore be many persons found to object to any change of system which tends to place a poor man and a rich man more nearly on a footing of equality in a candidature for a seat in Parliament. The long delays which interposed between the introduction of Mr. Forster's Bill and its passing through the House of Commons gave the House of Lords a plausible excuse for rejecting it altogether. The Bill was not read a third time in the Commons until August 8; it was not sent up to the Lords until the 10th of that month—a date later than that usually fixed for the close of the Session. Lord Shaftesbury moved that the Bill be rejected on the ground that there was no time left for a proper consideration of it, and his motion was carried by ninety-seven votes to forty-eight. The manner in which the measure had been dealt with in the House of Commons made it seem clear to the Lords that there was really a very general feeling of dislike to the ballot among the members of the representative chamber, and emboldened them to think that they would be rendering a grateful service by throwing it out.

The House of Lords was right enough in assuming that many members of the House of Commons were not particularly anxious for the introduction of the ballot. The proposal of the Government was welcome to the voters in general; but it was naturally regarded with hostile feelings by many men who felt small assurance that their seats would be safe if the franchise were to be exercised by everyone in security and independence. The ballot was introduced, we do not hesitate to say, in defiance of the secret prejudices of the majority of the House of Commons which consented to pass it. Mr Gladstone was determined to pass it in the interest of the voters, of political independence, and of public morals. He was now as thoroughly convinced as Mr. Bright himself that the ballot in these countries would be the very keystone of political independence. Recent publications have enabled us to know that on one occasion, at least, Lord Palmerston did all he could privately to encourage the House of Lords to reject an important measure introduced and passed in the Commons by his own Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Gladstone. This fact, which would be incredible if it were not made known upon authority impossible to question, was not likely to furnish an example which Mr. Gladstone would follow. Mr. Gladstone accepted the decision of the Lords as a mere passing delay, and with the beginning of the next Session the ballot came up again. It was presented in the form of a Bill to amend the laws relating to procedure at parliamentary and municipal elections, and it included of course the introduction of the system of secret voting. The Bill passed quickly through the House of Commons. Those who most disliked it began now to see that they must

make up their minds to meet their fate. When the Bill went up to the Lords an amendment was introduced into it with the view of making the ballot optional. This preposterous alteration was of course objected to by the Commons, and finally the House of Lords gave it up. There would obviously be no protection whatever for the class of voters whom it was necessary to protect, if the ballot were made simply optional. The tenant who exercised his option of voting secretly against his landlord might just as well have voted openly. The landlord would not be slow to assume that the secrecy was adopted for the purpose of giving a vote against him. At the instance of the House of Lords, however, the ballot was introduced as an experiment, and the Act was passed to continue in force for eight years; that is, until the end of 1880. We may anticipate matters a little by saying that no measure of reform introduced through all that season of splendid reforming energy has given more universal satisfaction or worked with happier effect than the ballot. There is indeed much still to be done to purify the electoral system. The ballot has not extinguished corruption in small boroughs. It is still perfectly possible to carry on the most demoralising system of bribery there. The plan of what we may call payment by results still flourishes in many a small constituency. It is quietly given out that if a certain candidate be elected there will be money flowing through the borough after the election; and every voter who is open to corruption goes to the polling-place determined to vote for this candidate, because he knows that his vote adds to the chances of the borough's coming in for the refreshing golden shower. Probably nothing could put a stop to the corruption in very small boroughs but their utter disfranchisement, or some system which would group several of them into one constituency. But in all other objects sought by the Ballot Act it has been successful. It has put an end to an enormous amount of corruption, and it may be said to have almost altogether extinguished the illegitimate influence of the landlord, the employer, and the patron. During a debate on woman's suffrage in 1871, Mr. Gladstone stated that if the ballot were once introduced there would be no harm done by allowing women to vote. Nearly ten years have passed since that remarkable declaration, and the proposal to extend the franchise to female householders does not seem to have made much practical progress. But it must be admitted that the adoption of the ballot makes a great difference in the conditions of the controversy. It was one thing to ask that women should have imposed on them the duty of going up to the open poll and recording their votes in public, and quite another thing to ask that they should be allowed to enter a quiet

compartment of the polling-place and record an independent vote under the saving shelter of the ballot.

The University Tests Bill was one of the great measures carried successfully into legislation during this season of unparalleled activity. The effect of this Bill was to admit all lay students of whatever faith to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge on equal terms. This settled practically a controversy, and removed a grievance which had been attracting keen public interest for at least five-and-thirty years. Gradually the restrictions which Oxford and Cambridge drew around their systems of education had been relaxed. Dissenters had been admitted first to the advantages of education within the sphere of the Universities, and next to the honours which success in the University course was fitted to command. Twice over within a very few years had a measure for the purpose been carried through the Commons only to be rejected by the Lords. In this busy year of 1871, the Liberal Government introduced the Bill again, and this time, after some remonstrances and futile struggle, the Conservative majority in the House of Lords allowed their prejudices to succumb, and affirmed the principle of religious equality in the distribution of the honours which the two universities have to award to those who win success as students within the sphere of their teaching. The Government also passed a Trades Union Bill, moderating as has already been shown the legislation which bore harshly on the workmen. They established by Act of Parliament the Local Government Board, a new department of the administration entrusted with the care of the public health, the control of the Poor Law system, and all regulations applying to the business of districts throughout the country. The Government repealed the ridiculous and almost forgotten Ecclesiastical Titles Bill.

The popularity of Mr. Gladstone's Government was all the time somewhat impaired by the line of action, and even perhaps by the personal deportment, of some of its members. Mr. Lowe's budgets were not popular; and Mr. Lowe had a taste for sarcasm which it was pleasant no doubt to indulge in at the expense of heavy men, but which was, like other pleasant things, a little dangerous when enjoyed too freely. One of Mr. Lowe's budgets contained a proposition to make up for deficiency of income by a tax on matches. It seems not unlikely that the whole proposition first arose in Mr. Lowe's mind in connection with a pretty play upon words which he offered as its motto. 'Ex luce lucellum,' he suggested should be a device imprinted on every taxed match-box. The joke had to be explained; its humour wholly vanishes when it is put into English—'a little profit out of light;' not much drollery in that, surely.

The country laughed at the joke and not with it. The match trade rose up in arms against the proposal. It was shown that that trade was really a very large one, employing vast numbers of poor people, both in the manufacture and the sale, especially in the east end of London; and it was proved that the imposition recommended by Mr. Lowe would put out the light most effectually. All the little boys and girls of the metropolis whose poor bread, whose miserable lucellum depended on the trade, arose in infantile insurrection against Mr. Lowe. There were vast processions of match-makers and match-sellers to Palace Yard to protest againt the tax. The contest was pitiful, painful, ludicrous; no Ministry could endure it long. Mr. Lowe, who had not the slightest idea when he proposed his tax of being regarded as a worse than Lucifer by the vendors of lucifer matches, was only too glad to withdraw from his unenviable position. It was not pleasant to be regarded as a sort of ogre by thousands of poor little ragged boys and girls. Mr. Lowe had ventured on the proposal chiefly because of the example of the United States, where the whole system and social conditions are so different from ours as to afford no guarantee whatever that a tax which is found endurable by the one community is likely to be found endurable by the other. He withdrew his unlucky proposal along with his ill-omened joke, and set himself to work to repair by other ways and means the ravages which warlike times had made in his financial system. No particular harm was done to anybody but the Government. They were made to seem ridiculous. The miserable match-tax was just the sort of thing to impress the popular mind as something niggling, paltry, and pitiful. Mr. Lowe did not hear the end of it for a long time. The attempt and not the deed confounded him. Another member of the administration, Mr. Ayrton, a man of much ability but still more self-confidence, was constantly bringing himself and his Government into quarrels. He was blessed with a gift of offence. If a thing could be done either civilly or rudely, Mr. Ayrton was pretty sure to do it rudely. He was impatient with dull people, and did not always remember that those unhappy persons not only have their feelings, but sometimes have their votes. He quarrelled with officials; he quarrelled with the newspapers; he seemed to think a civil tongue gave evidence of a feeble intellect. He pushed his way along, trampling on people's prejudices with about as much consideration as a steam-roller shows for the gravel it crushes. Even when Mr. Ayrton was in the right, he had a wrong way of showing it.

CHAPTER LX.

THE BLACK SEA CLAUSE: THE 'ALABAMA' ARBITRATION.

MEANWHILE the portentous changes which were taking place on the Continent of Europe had, as was natural, their effect on England and the English Government. The Emperor Napoleon having taken to himself a Liberal Minister, M. Emile Ollivier, one of the famous Five who for years had represented Opposition in the French Legislative Chamber, had sought to get a renewed charter for himself and his dynasty by means of a *plebiscite*. Representing the question at issue as one of revolution or social order, the Emperor obtained a very large majority of Ayes in favour of his policy and his house, seven and a quarter million Ayes against one and a half million Noes. But the minority was considerable, and one peculiarity made it specially ominous. There were more than 52,000 'Noes' among the votes of the army and navy. The Mexican expedition and its ghastly failure had much injured the *prestige* of the Emperor with the two services. The truth could not be concealed that he had been peremptorily ordered out of Mexico by the United States Government and that he had obeyed the command, leaving Maximilian to his fate. Louis Napoleon saw that he must do something to recover his military popularity. The overthrow of Austria by Prussia had roused a strong feeling of jealousy in France. M. Thiers in particular had endeavoured to keep up an angry mood against the Imperial Government. He constantly reproached the Emperor for not interposing in some way to protect Austria and restrict the ambition of Prussia. Louis Napoleon therefore found himself driven to try the gamester's last and desperate throw. He seized the first excuse for forcing a war on Prussia.

It is probable that war would have come in any case. M. Prevost-Paradol had compared France and Prussia to two express trains started from opposite points along the same line of rails. The collision must come; it was merely a question of time. The comparison was happy. Prussia knew very well that her success over Austria had aroused the jealousy and the fears of France. France began to revive the old talk of the frontier on the Rhine. Bismarck had probably made up his mind that the quarrel would have to be fought out one day. Still it was a fatal mistake of the Emperor Napoleon to force the quarrel on such a pretext as the fact that the Spanish people had invited a distant relation of the King of Prussia to become Sovereign of Spain. Louis Napoleon

managed to put himself completely in the wrong. The King of Prussia at once induced his relative to withdraw from the candidature in order not to disturb the susceptibilities of France; and then the French Government pressed for a general pledge that the King of Prussia would never on any future occasion allow of any similar candidature. When it came to this, there was an end to negotiation. It was clear then that the Emperor was resolved to have a quarrel. Count Bismarck must have smiled a grim smile. His enemy had delivered himself into Bismarck's hands.

The Emperor had been for some time in failing health. He had not been paying much attention to the details of his administration. False security and self-conceit had operated among his generals and his War Department to the utter detriment of the army. Nothing was ready. The whole system was falling to pieces. Long after France had declared war, the army that was to go to Berlin was only dragging heavily towards the frontier. The experience of what had happened to Austria might have told anyone that the moment Prussia saw her opportunity she would move with the direct swiftness of an eagle's flight. But the French army stuck as if it was in mud. What everyone expected came to pass. The Prussians came down on the French like the rush of a torrent. The fortunes of the war were virtually decided in a day. Then the French lost battle after battle. The Emperor dared not return to Paris. The defence —for the Prussians had long since become the invaders—was carried on with regard to the Emperor's political fortunes rather than to the military necessities of the hour. There was nothing but French defeats until there came at last the crowning disaster of Sedan. The Emperor surrendered his sword, and was a captive in the hands of his enemies. The Second Empire was gone in a moment. Paris proclaimed the republic; the Empress Eugenie fled to England; the Second Empire was all in the dust; the conqueror at Versailles was hailed as German Emperor.

We need not follow the fortunes of the war. France made many a brave and brilliant attempt to rally; but it was too late. Official neglect and mismanagement had done their work. No courage, no patriotism, could now retrieve the fortunes of the field. Marshal Bazaine, the ill-omened soldier of the Mexican campaign, surrendered at Metz with a vast army; Paris was invested, was besieged; had to give up, or famine would have done the work for her. The conquering enemy had to be spoken with at the gate. France had nothing for it but to accept the terms imposed on her. She lost two provinces and had to pay an enormous fine; and the war was over.

The sympathies of the English people generally were at first almost altogether with Prussia. The policy of the Emperor Napoleon had seemed

so gross and outrageous that the public voice here applauded the resistance of Germany to his attempted dictation. But when the Empire fell the feeling suddenly changed. It was the common idea that the Prussians ought to have been content with Sedan and the complete destruction of the Bonapartist Empire and have made generous terms with the Republic. Great popular meetings were held in Trafalgar Square, London, and in various provincial cities, to express sympathy with the hardly-entreated French. The sympathy of the Irish populations had been with France all through. The old bonds of comradeship dating from the Irish Brigade and from long before it had still their hold upon the emotional and impassioned Irish nature. Many persons everywhere thought the Government ought to do something to assist the French Republic. Some were of opinion that the glory of England would suffer if she did not get into a fight with some Power or other. It came out in the course of the eager diplomatic discussions which were going on that there had been some secret talk at different times of a private engagement between France and Prussia which would have allowed France on certain conditions to annex Belgium. This astounding revelation excited alarm and anger in England. The Government met that possible danger by at once pressing upon France and Prussia a new treaty by which these Powers bound themselves jointly with England to maintain the independence of Belgium and to take up arms against any State invading it. The Government might fairly claim to have thus provided satisfactorily against any menace to the integrity and independence of Belgium, and they prepared against the more general dangers of the hour by asking for a large vote to enable them to strengthen the military defences of the country. But they were seriously embarrassed by the manner in which Russia suddenly proposed to deal with the Treaty of Paris. One article of that Treaty declared that 'the Black Sea is neutralised; its waters and its ports, thrown open to the mercantile marine of every nation, are formally and in perpetuity interdicted to the flag of war, either of the Powers possessing its coasts or of any other Power,' and the Sultan of Turkey and the Emperor of Russia engaged to establish or maintain no military or maritime arsenals on the shores of that sea. Russia now took advantage of the war between France and Prussia to say that she would not submit to be bound by that article of the Treaty any longer. The Russian statesmen pleaded as a justification of this blunt and sudden proceeding that the Treaty of Paris had been ignored by other Powers and in a variety of ways since the time of its signature, and that Russia could not be expected to endure for ever an article which bore heavily, directly, and specially upon her.

The manner of making the announcement was startling, ominous, and

offensive. But there really was not much that any English statesman could do to interfere with Russia's declared intentions. Two of the great Powers concerned in the Treaty of Paris were occupied too gravely with concerns of their own to have much interest in the neutralisation of the Black Sea. It was not likely that France or Prussia would stop just then from the death-grapple in which they were engaged to join in coercing Russia to keep to the disputed article in the Treaty. Austria of course would not under such circumstances undertake to interfere. It would have been a piece of preposterous quixotry on the part of England to take on herself alone the responsibility of maintaining the sanctity of the Treaty. Besides, it had long been clear to every practical politician that sooner or later, by one process or another, Russia would shake herself free from the obligation imposed on her by the clause which she now challenged. Literally it affected all the great Powers alike, but in fact it only concerned Russia, and it was devised as a means of restraining her alone. The Black Sea is virtually a Russian lake. At least it may be thus described if we think of military and political questions only; for Turkey's use of the Black Sea could hardly be of vital moment to Europe, and Turkey and Russia divide between them the Euxine shores. However wise and just therefore the desire of the Western Powers to have the war flag of Russia kept out of the waters of the Black Sea, it must have been clear to every statesman, even at the time when the Treaty was made, that should Russia ever be in a position to demand a release from the conditions which her defeat in the Crimea imposed upon her, she would take advantage of the opportunity. It must have been expected that she would insist upon the abrogation of the clause in the Treaty of Paris which shut her navy out of the waters that washed her own southern shores. But the manner of demanding the abrogation of the clause surprised and offended even more than the demand itself. There was something Calmuck in the coarse bluntness of the obvious admission that Russia now insisted on new conditions because she found that there was no possibility of any Western alliance to interfere with her will. If England had gone to war with Russia, she would have gone to war for the maintenance of an article in the Treaty of Paris, which no one believed could be long maintained in any case, and for which most of the European Powers cared nothing either way. Lord Granville confined himself to remonstrating against the extraordinary assumption that any Power which signed a treaty could legitimately and of its own motion repudiate any part of the treaty at any moment when it thought fit. If Russia cared about argument it must be admitted that Lord Granville's argument was beyond reply. Lord Granville merely affirmed that when several parties

have entered into a joint engagement it cannot be open to any one of them to withdraw from it whenever he pleases, without consulting the others. But of course Russia cared nothing about argument or fairness in the matter. She saw that she had an unprecedented chance, a chance perhaps never to occur again, for getting out of her engagement with impunity; and she seized upon it and held to it.

We do not see how even a Russian, outside the official world, could undertake to justify the action of the Russian Government. On the other hand, we fear that the Russian Emperor might find a good deal in the events then passing in Europe to plead in excuse of his policy. Public law did not seem for the time to be held in very high regard. The transactions between Prussia and France with regard to Belgium were disgraceful to the statesmen who took part in them. They were cynically avowed by Count Bismarck when he found it suited his convenience to betray his late accomplices. A feeble attempt was made on the part of the accomplices to disavow them, or deny them, or escape in some way from the shame of having set them going. Each party fell back upon the policy of the husband and wife meeting by chance at the masked ball, each of whom makes overtures to the unrecognised other, and each of whom on a mutual recognition insists that the overtures were only made with the object of trying the other's virtue. Thus Europe was amused for a few days, and ought no doubt to have been scandalised, by the controversy between France and Prussia as to which was the tempter, which was the tempted, and what was the real motive of the temptation. Then again the King of Italy took advantage of the withdrawal of the French army of occupation from Rome to announce that in the interest of order and to deliver Rome and the Pope from the tyranny of the Pope's foreign guards, he felt compelled to march the Italian troops into the city, take forcible possession of it, and make it the capital of his dominions. We do not propose to discuss or even to touch upon the religious question then at issue between the Vatican and the King of Italy. We are willing to look at all that took place from the point of view of those who desired that Italy should become one united kingdom and should have Rome for her capital. Even from this point of view it seems absolutely impossible to justify the course taken by the King of Italy. It is easy to understand how Italians and other men should say to themselves, 'now that the thing has been done, we are glad it is done, and is over.' But it would baffle the ingenuity of any casuist to find a justification for such a mode of solving a great political question unless on the bold assumption that the stronger has always a right to do anything he thinks proper with the weaker. At all events it is not surprising that when

the Emperor of Russia saw such strokes of policy approved of by the Cabinets of Great Powers like England, he should have said to himself that there was no reason why he alone of all other Sovereigns on the European Continent should not be at liberty to lay rude hands on opportunity. There was apparently a general scramble going on; and the Emperor Alexander may not have seen why there should be any law of morality or honour specially binding on him which was not binding on his neighbours. Such of course would not have been the view of a moralist; but the Emperor Alexander was perhaps of the way of thinking of that philosopher who has argued that it is immoral to be in advance of the morality of one's age. Perhaps Alexander thought that in acting as he did he was only acting up to the morality of his contemporaries.

Lord Granville, however, continued to remonstrate. It was necessary to find some way of getting the European Powers decently out of the difficulty in which they were placed. To enforce the Treaty was out of the question; but on the other hand it did not look seemly that they should put up quite tamely with the dictatorial resolve of Russia. The ingenious mind of Count Bismarck found a way of putting a fair show on the action of Europe. He suggested that a conference should be held in London to talk the whole matter over. On November 26, 1870, he addressed a circular to Austria, Turkey, Italy, and Russia, requesting them to authorise their representatives to assemble in London at a conference of the Powers which had signed the Treaty of March 30, 1856, in order 'to discuss the questions which are raised in connexion with the communications in the circular of the Imperial Russian Cabinet.' This invitation was stated to have been issued after the English Cabinet had assured Count Bismarck of its assent. Lord Granville politely assumed that the Russian Government had merely announced its wish to have the clause in the Treaty abrogated as a matter for the consideration of the European Powers, and that the conference was to be assembled 'without any foregone conclusion as to its results.' This graceful little fiction was welcomed by all diplomatists. The conference met with every becoming appearance of a full belief in the minds of all its members that they were about to consider a proposal which they might either accept or reject as their free judgment should determine. The conference assembled on January 17, 1871, and began its labours by an abstract declaration of principle. A special protocol was signed, affirming it to be an essential principle of the law of nations that no State could release itself from the engagements of a treaty unless with the consent of the other contracting Powers. This important declaration, which amounted exactly to the announcement of the fact that there must be at

least two parties to a bargain, was solemnly agreed upon, and then the conference felt itself quite free to finish its work on March 13, 1871, by agreeing to a Treaty abrogating the clause for the neutralisation of the Black Sea. There was something a little farcical about the whole transaction. We learn from Madame de Remusat that when the great Napoleon played chess he liked to move the pieces occasionally in any way that suited his plans, and without any particular regard to the established rules of the game. If it seemed advantageous to him at some particular moment to give to his king the unlimited movement of the queen, he was in the habit of composedly adopting this new principle. Now we can perhaps imagine a few old-fashioned courtiers being a little offended at this arbitrary and one-sided plan of action, and conscious at the same time of their own inability to overrule the will of the great conqueror. What could be a more honourable and prudent way of reconciling principle and interest than to hold a chess conference, pass a resolution that it is one of the essential principles of the game that no player can alter its laws merely to please himself; and then after this saving protest proceed to authorise the Emperor Napoleon to make the particular moves that he happened just then to desire? Something like this was the policy pursued by the conference held in London. It did not tend to raise the credit or add to the popularity of the English Government. We do not know that there was anything better to do; we can only say that the Government deserves commiseration which at an important European crisis can do nothing better.

Other troubles began to press upon Mr. Gladstone's Government. A few weeks after the issue of the Russian circular repudiating the neutralisation clause in the Treaty of Paris, General Grant in opening the Congress of the United States announced that the time had come when the American Government must take some decided steps for the settlement of the *Alabama* claims. This dispute had reached what we may call its second stage. The first was when the English Government declined to admit any responsibility for the losses inflicted on American commerce. The second was arrived at when the more sober judgment of Lord Stanley acknowledged a willingness to submit the question to some manner of arbitrament. When matters had gone so far it was natural that attempts should be made at a convention for the settlement of the claims. In one instance a convention, devised by Mr. Reverdy Johnson, then American Minister in England, had actually been signed by Lord Clarendon, Foreign Secretary, whose death in June 1870 was followed by Lord Granville's removal from the Colonial to the Foreign Office. The Senate of the United States however rejected this convention by a majority of

fifty-four to one, and Mr. Reverdy Johnson resigned his office. The doom of the convention was chiefly brought about by the efforts of Mr. Charles Sumner, a leading member of the Senate of the United States. Most readers are probably aware of the fact that treaties concluded on behalf of the American Government have to be referred for confirmation to the United States Senate, and that it is in the power of the Senate either to confirm or to reject them. In the foreign policy of the American Republic the Senate exercises a direct and most important influence. Mr. Sumner was at that time the most eloquent and the most influential member of the Senate. He was a man of remarkable force of character, a somewhat 'masterful' temperament, to use an expressive provincial word, a temperament corresponding with his great stature, his stately presence, and his singularly handsome and expressive face. He was one of the leaders of the anti-slavery movement, and the murderous assault made upon him some twelve years before in the old Senate Chamber at Washington by a Southern planter had filled the world then with horror and alarm. Sir George Cornewall Lewis happily described it as the first blow in a Civil War. Mr. Sumner had been for the greater part of his life an enthusiastic admirer of England and English institutions. He had made himself acquainted with England and Englishmen, and was a great favourite in English society. He was a warm friend of Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, the Duke of Argyll, and many other eminent English public men. He was particularly enthusiastic about England because of the manner in which she had emancipated her slaves and the emphatic terms in which English society always expressed its horror of the system of slavery. In his own country Mr. Sumner passed for an Anglo-maniac. When the American Civil War broke out he expected with full confidence to find the sympathies of England freely given to the side of the North. He was struck with amazement when he found that they were to so great an extent given to the South. But when he saw that the *Alabama* and other Southern cruisers had been built in England, manned in England, and allowed to leave our ports with apparently the applause of three-fourths of the representative men of England, his feelings towards this country underwent a sudden and a most complete change. He now persuaded himself that the sympathies of the English people were actually with slavery, and that England was resolved to lend her best help for the setting up of a slave-owning Republic to the destruction of the American Union.

In this Mr. Sumner was mistaken. Great wrong was thoughtlessly done to the American Union by the acts of statesmen and others in England, but it is not true that there was any general sympathy with slavery or any national treachery to the American Union. The whole question

has been already discussed in these pages, and the writer has not hesitated to condemn in the strongest terms much of the policy and many of the utterances of some of the leading statesmen of England. But Mr. Sumner was mistaken in his main conclusion; the conclusion that love of slavery and hatred of the union dictated the foolish things that were often said, and the unrightful things that were sometimes done. His mind, however, became filled with a fervour of anger against England. The zeal of his cause ate him up. All his love for England turned into hate. He was as little under the influence of sober reason, when he discussed the conduct of England, as Burke was when he declaimed against the French Revolution. During all his career, Mr. Sumner had been a professed lover of peace; had made peace his prevailing principle of action; and yet he now spoke and acted as if he were determined that there must be war between England and the United States. Mr. Sumner denounced the convention made by Mr. Reverdy Johnson, with a force of argument and of passionate eloquence which would have borne down all opposition if the Senate had not already been almost unanimously of one mind with him. It is right to say that the particular convention agreed on between Lord Clarendon and Mr. Reverdy Johnson does not seem to have been one that the American Senate could reasonably be expected to accept, or that could possibly give satisfaction to the American people. Mr. Reverdy Johnson was a Marylander, and may possibly have had some tinge of Southern sympathies. With a kindly and good-natured purpose to put an end to an international quarrel he does not seem to have considered the difference between skinning over a wound and healing it. The defect of his convention was that it made the whole question a mere matter of individual claims. It professed to have to deal with a number of personal and private claims of various kinds, pending since a former settlement in 1853—claims made on the one side by British subjects against the American Government, and on the other by American citizens against the English Government; and it proposed to throw in the *Alabama* claims with all the others, and have a convention for the general clearance of the whole account. Now it must be evident to anyone, English or American, who considers what the complaints made by the American Government were, that this way of dealing with the question could not possibly satisfy the American people. It is surprising that a statesman like Lord Clarendon could for a moment have persuaded himself that there would be the slightest use in presenting such a convention to the American Senate. That he did so persuade himself and others is only one additional illustration of the curious ignorance of the condition of American political and national feeling which misguided England's policy during the whole of the American war. The

claim set up by the United States, on account of the cruise of the *Alabama*, was first of all a national claim. The American Government and people said, 'The course you have taken has prolonged the war against us. You have given comfort and strength to our enemies. You have allowed them to use your ports as arsenals and points of departure for their attacks on us; your flag has protected their cruisers; your sailors have manned their vessels and shotted their guns. We claim of you as a nation injured by a nation.' To this the convention signed by Lord Clarendon made answer, 'We are willing that the two nations should go into arbitration as to any individual claims for personal damages which a few Englishmen may have on the one side and a few Americans on the other. We are willing to look into the items of any little bill which Mr. Thompson, of New York, may present, for injuries done to his property, provided that you will do us the favour of perusing in the same spirit any bill which may be presented to you on behalf Mr. Johnson, of Manchester.' This is really a fair statement of the difference between the convention which the United States Senate rejected and that which the American Government afterwards accepted.

The English Government wisely gave way. They consented to send out a Commission to Washington to confer with an American Commission, and to treat the whole question in dispute as national and not merely individual. The Commission was to enter upon all the various subjects of dispute unsettled between England and the United States; the *Alabama* claims, the San Juan Boundary, and the Canadian Fishery Question. The Dominion of Canada was to be represented on the Commission. The English commissioners were Earl de Grey and Ripon (afterwards created Marquis of Ripon, in return for his services at Washington), Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Montague Bernard, Professor of International Law at the University of Oxford; and Sir Edward Thornton, English Minister at Washington. Sir John A. Macdonald represented Canada. The American Commissioners were Mr. Hamilton Fish, Secretary of State, General Schenck, afterwards American Minister in England, Mr. J. C. Bancroft Davis, Mr. Justice Nelson, Mr. Justice Williams, and Mr. E. R. Hoar.

The Commissioners held a long series of meetings in Washington, and at length arrived at a basis of arbitration. This was set forth in a memorable document, the Treaty of Washington. The Treaty of Washington acknowledged the international character of the dispute; and it opened with a remarkable admission on the part of the English Government. It announced that 'Her Britannic Majesty has authorised her High Commissioners and Plenipotentiaries to express, in a friendly spirit, the regret

felt by her Majesty's Government for the escape, under whatever circumstances, of the *Alabama* and other vessels from British ports, and for the depredations committed by those vessels.' This was a very unusual acknowledgment to make as the opening of a document intended to establish a tribunal of arbitration for the claims in dispute. It ought not in itself to be considered as anything of a humiliation. In public as in private life, it ought to be honourable rather than otherwise to express regret that we should even unwittingly have done harm to our neighbour, or allowed harm to be done to him; that we have shot our arrow o'er the house and hurt our brother. But when compared with the stand which English ministers had taken not many years before, this was indeed a considerable change of attitude. It is not surprising that many Englishmen chafed at the appearance of submission which it presented. The Treaty then proceeded to lay down three rules which it was agreed should be accepted by the Arbitrators as applicable to the case. These rules were: 'a neutral Government is bound: first, to use due diligence to prevent the fitting-out, arming, or equipping, within its jurisdiction, of any vessel which it has reasonable ground to believe is intended to cruise or to carry on war against a Power with which it is at peace, and also to use like diligence to prevent the departure from its jurisdiction of any vessel intended to cruise or carry on war as above, such vessel having been specially adapted, in whole or in part, within such jurisdiction to warlike use. Secondly, not to permit or suffer either belligerent to make use of its ports or waters as the base of naval operations against the other, or for the purpose of the renewal or augmentation of military supplies or arms, or the recruitment of men. Thirdly, to exercise due diligence in its own ports and waters, and as to all persons within its jurisdiction, to prevent any violation of the foregoing obligations and duties.'

The British Commissioners followed up the acceptance of these three rules by a saving clause, declaring that the English Government could not assent to them as a 'statement of principles of international law which were in force at the time when the claims arose;' but that, 'in order to evince its desire of strengthening the friendly relations between the two countries, and of making satisfactory provision for the future,' it agreed that in deciding the questions arising out of the claims these principles should be accepted, 'and the high contracting parties agree to observe these rules between themselves in future, and to bring them to the knowledge of other maritime Powers, and to invite them to accede to them.' The Treaty then went on to provide for the settlement of the *Alabama* claims by a tribunal of five arbitrators, one to be appointed by the Queen, and the others respectively by the President of the United States, the

King of Italy, the President of the Swiss Confederation, and the Emperor of Brazil. This tribunal was to meet in Geneva, and was to decide by a majority all the questions submitted to it. The Treaty further provided for a tribunal to settle what may be called individual claims on either side, and another commission to meet afterwards at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and deal with the Fishery Question, an old outstanding dispute as to the reciprocal rights of British and American subjects to fish on each other's coasts. It referred the question of the northern boundary between the British North American territories and the United States to the arbitration of the German Emperor. It also opened the navigation of the St. Lawrence and other rivers.

Some delay was caused in the meeting of the tribunal of arbitration at Geneva by the sudden presentation on the part of the American Government of what were called the indirect claims. To the surprise of everybody, the American case when presented was found to include claims for vast and indeed almost limitless damages, for indirect losses alleged to be caused by the cruise of the *Alabama* and the other vessels The loss by the transfer of trade to English vessels, the loss by increased rates of insurance, and all imaginable losses incident to the prolongation of the war, were now made part of the American claims. It was clear that if such a principle were admitted there was no possible reason why the claims should not include every dollar spent in the whole operations of the war and in supplying any of the war's damages, from the first day when the *Alabama* put to sea. No one could undertake to say as a matter of certainty that the Southern Confederates might not have submitted at once if only the *Alabama* had been seized and detained, and therefore indirect claims might just as well be stretched out at once so as to cover all the subsequent expenses of the war. In truth, the indirect claims were not only absurd, but even monstrous, and the English Government had not for one moment the slightest idea of admitting them as part of the case to be laid before the arbitrators at Geneva. The bare suggestion seemed more like a rude practical joke than a statesmanlike proposition. Even men like Mr. Bright, who had been devoted friends of the North during the war, protested against this insufferable claim. It was at last withdrawn. We now know on the best possible authority that the American Government never meant to press it. Mr. John Russell Young's interesting account of his journey 'Around the World with General Grant' gives an account of a conversation he had with the late President of the United States on the subject of the indirect claims. Mr. Young assures his readers that all his reports of statements made by General Grant have been submitted to General Grant's own revision.

General Grant told Mr. Young that he was personally opposed to the presentation of the indirect claims, and that his Secretary of State, Mr. Fish, was also opposed to them. 'I,' said General Grant, 'never believed in the presentation of indirect claims against England. I did not think it would do any good. I knew England would not consider them, and that it would complicate our meritorious case by giving her something to complain about.' Mr. Fish agreed in this view, but was of opinion that Mr. Sumner had to be considered. Mr. Sumner was the chairman of the Senate's Committee on Foreign Affairs, a formidable man at such a time. He was not cordial to the Treaty, and was displeased because General Grant and Mr. Fish had already overruled one of his suggestions, 'that the first condition of peace with England should be the withdrawal of her flag from the North American continent.' That suggestion General Grant rightly described as a declaration of war, and 'I wanted peace, not war.' Mr Sumner had laid great stress on indirect claims, and not to offend him, and not to leave an opening for future complaints on the part of 'demagogues,' it was thought by Mr. Fish that the best way of getting rid of the indirect claims would be to let them go to the Geneva arbitration. General Grant allowed himself to be convinced against his will. 'But neither Mr. Fish nor myself expected any good from the presentation. It really did harm to the Treaty by putting our Government and those in England who were our friends in a false position. It was a mistake, but well-intended. It is a mistake ever to say more than you mean, and as we never meant the indirect claims, we should not have presented them even to please Mr. Sumner.' It was indeed a profound mistake. It was a stroke of policy which no statesman should ever have stooped to sanction. The arbitration was on the point of being broken off. The excitement in England was intense. The American Government had at last to withdraw the claims. The Geneva arbitrators of their own motion declared that all such claims were invalid and contrary to international law. The mere fact of their presentation went far to destroy all the credit which the United States would have obtained by the firm maintenance of their just demands and their recognition by the Court of Arbitration.

The decision of the Geneva Tribunal went against England. The court were unanimous in finding England responsible for the acts of the *Alabama*. A majority found her responsible for the acts of the *Florida* and for some of those of the *Shenandoah*, but not responsible for those of other vessels. They awarded a sum of about three millions and a quarter sterling as compensation for all losses and final settlement of all claims including interest. Sir Alexander Cockburn, who attended the sittings of

the court as the representative of England, presented a long and eloquent protest against a great part of the finding of the tribunal. While admitting the decision in the case of the *Alabama*, and recommending submission to the general award, Sir Alexander Cockburn made a sort of historical vindication, or apologia, of the conduct of the English Government during the Civil War. It was an eloquent, patriotic, and impassioned *plaidoyer*, which seemed oddly out of place in the somewhat dry and business-like records of the tribunal's transactions. It occupied 250 pages of the *London Gazette*. Many readers admired it; some smiled at it. The great majority of Englishmen did not read it. It was not so much preserved as entombed in the ponderous pages of the official journal.

The German Emperor was left to decide as to the ownership of the small island of San Juan, near Vancouver's Island, a question remaining unsettled since the Oregon Treaty, and already explained in this work. The Emperor decided that the American claim to the island was just. San Juan had for years been in a somewhat hazardous condition of joint occupation by England and the United States. It was evacuated by England, in consequence of the award, at the close of November 1873.

The principle of arbitration had not thus far worked in a manner calculated greatly to delight the English people. In each case the award had gone decidedly against them. No doubt it had gone against them because the right of each case was against them; and those who submit to arbitration have no business to complain because the decision is not given in their favour. England had in any case gained much by the policy which submitted the dispute to a peaceful tribunal. She had saved her own people and her opponents as well from the terrible ordeal of a war in which victory would have been only one degree better than defeat. She had avoided all the legacy of reciprocal hate which is the inevitable penalty of war. She had done her part towards the establishment of a great principle for the benefit of all coming generations. Yet it would be impossible to say that the feeling of the English people was one of unmixed satisfaction. The bulk of a population is not made up of moral philosophers; and what most of the English people saw was that England had been compelled in homely phrase to 'knuckle down' to America. The policy which accepted the arbitration seems to us to have been entirely wise, honourable, statesmanlike and just. The fault to be found was with that earlier policy which gave the United States only too fair a ground for asserting their claims. But it is certain that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues suffered in public esteem by the mere fact of their having accepted the arbitration which went so signally against England. They were

somewhat in the position of a Government who have to submit to rigorous and humiliating terms of peace. They may not have been responsible for the war. It may have been no act of theirs which made the acceptance of the harsh terms a cruel necessity. It may not be open to any one to say that they had any practical alternative but to submit to the demands of the occasion. All this may be true. Yet none the less is the Government to be pitied which has to submit to any terms of peace by which its people seem to be humbled. The Conservative party made it for a long time a great point against Mr. Gladstone's Government that he had accepted the treaty of Washington. They did not always seem to reflect that a leading Conservative, Sir Stafford Northcote, had been made one of the joint commissioners in order that the arrangement might not seem the mere act of a political party. Perhaps in one or two instances the manner in which the Treaty was vindicated may have helped to embitter the sacrifice. Mr. Lowe, for instance, put it as a clear saving of money, pointing out that a war would have cost much more than the expense of paying off the award. This was not the happiest way of commending the transaction to the sympathies of a proud and somewhat unreasoning public. However that may be, it is certain that the effect of the Geneva arbitration was to create a sore and angry feeling among Englishmen in general. The feeling found expression with some ; smouldered in sullenness with others. It was unreasonable and unjust ; but it was not altogether unnatural ; and it had its effect on the popularity of Mr. Gladstone's Government.

The opening of the Session of 1872 was made melancholy by the announcement that Lord Mayo, the Viceroy of India, had been killed by a fanatical assassin in a convict settlement, on one of the Andaman Islands, which the Viceroy was inspecting. Lord Mayo had borne himself well in his difficult position, and had won the admiration of men of all parties by his firmness, his energy, his humanity, and his justice.

CHAPTER LXI.

THE TIDE ON THE TURN.

The Liberal Ministry continued somehow to fall off in popularity. They made a great many enemies. This fact was for the most part rather to their credit than otherwise. They came into office pledged to carry out certain reforms, and they did carry them out regardless of the offence they

gave to class privileges and vested interests. A great reforming administration must always count on making enemies, and enemies whose hostility will be subtle and enduring. The Prime Minister himself was personally too much absorbed in the zeal of his cause not sometimes to run counter to the feelings, the prejudices, the sensitive jealousies of men less earnest and less self-forgetting. Mr. Gladstone was profoundly serious in his purposes of reform; and very serious men are seldom popular in a society like that of London. The long series of bold and vigorous reforms was undoubtedly causing the public to lose its breath. People were getting tired of going on, as an ordinary walker gets tired of trying to keep up with some man who is bent on walking as fast and as far as he possibly can without rest or interruption. The inevitable reaction was setting in. It must have come in any case. No popularity, no skill, no cunning in the management of men, no quality or endowment on the part of the Prime Minister, could have wholly prevented that result. Mr. Gladstone was not cunning in the management of men. He would probably have despised himself for availing of such a craft had he possessed it. He showed his feelings too plainly. If men displeased him he seldom took the trouble to conceal his displeasure. He was too often 'pre-occupied,' as the French phrase puts it, to think of petty courtesies and small social arts. It was murmured among his followers that he was dictatorial; and no doubt he was dictatorial in the sense that he had strong purposes himself, and was earnest in trying to press them upon other men. His very religious opinions served to interfere with his social popularity. He seemed to be a curious blending of the English High Churchman and the Scottish Presbyterian. He displeased the ordinary English middle class by leaning too much to Ritualism, and on the other hand, he often offended the Roman Catholics by his impassioned diatribes against the Pope and the Church of Rome. One or two appointments made by or under the authority of Mr. Gladstone gave occasion to considerable controversy and to something like scandal. One of these was the appointment of the Attorney-General, Sir Robert Collier, to a Puisne Judgeship of the Court of Common Pleas, in order technically to qualify him for a seat on the bench of a new Court of Appeal—that is to say, to become one of the paid members of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The statute required that every judge of the Court of Appeal should have been a judge of one of the ordinary courts; and Sir Robert Collier was passed through the Court of Common Pleas in order that he might have the technical qualification. There was not the slightest suggestion of any improper motive on the part of Mr. Gladstone, or lack of legal or judicial fitness on the part of Sir Robert Collier. On the contrary, it was admitted

that Sir Robert Collier had helped the Government out of a difficulty by taking an appointment which several judges had declined and which had not quite such a position as that which the traditions of his office entitled him to expect. It seemed, however, as if there was something of a trick in the act which thus passed him through the one court in order to give him a technical qualification for the other. A vote of censure on the Government was moved in the House of Lords, and the universal impression was that it would be carried. Some of the Opposition leaders did all they could to make it the means of injuring the Government, and even went the length of including in their complaints the fact that the Lord Chancellor had given an appointment as Judge of a County Court to the Mr. Beales who was President of the Reform League when the Hyde Park railings were thrown down. The vote of censure was, however, rejected by eighty-nine against eighty-seven. A similar attempt was made in the House of Commons, and was defeated; only however by a majority of twenty-seven, a small majority in the House where the strength of the Government was supposed to lie. Another appointment which led to controversy was that of the Rev. W. W. Harvey to the Rectory of Ewelme. The law required that the Rector of Ewelme should be a member of the Convocation of Oxford, and Mr. Harvey, who had been educated at Cambridge, was made a member of Oxford Convocation—by Oxford, not by Mr. Gladstone—in order to qualify him for the appointment. In this instance too there was no question either as to the motives of the minister or the merits of the appointment. But, as in the former case, there seemed to many persons something like a trick in the manner of obtaining the qualification. Each case gave a chance to Mr. Gladstone's enemies which they were not slow to use. He was accused of casuistry, which to many Englishmen seems a sort of crime; and of Jesuitry, which to some Englishmen seems the worst of crimes. It was part of Mr. Gladstone's curious fortune to be denounced by certain enemies as a Roman Catholic in disguise, at the very time when he was estranging and offending some of his most earnest Catholic supporters by the energy of his attacks upon the political influence of their Church. There can be no doubt that, although in neither House of Parliament could any expression of censure be obtained, the 'Colliery explosion,' as it was called, and the 'Ewelme scandal,' gave a downward push to the declining popularity of Mr. Gladstone's administration.

The 'liquor interest' too was soon in arms against him. The United Kingdom Alliance 'for the suppression of the liquor traffic' had of late years been growing so strong as to become a positive influence in politics. Its object was to bring about the adoption of legislation which should

leave it in the power of a two-thirds majority in each locality to stop altogether, if it were so thought fit, the public sale of intoxicating drinks. The Parliamentary leader of the agitation was Sir Wilfrid Lawson, a man of position, of great energy, and of thorough earnestness. Sir Wilfrid Lawson was not, however, merely energetic and earnest. He had a peculiarly effective style of speaking, curiously unlike that which might be expected from the advocate of an austere and somewhat fanatical sort of legislation. He was a humourist of a fresh and vigorous order, and he always took care to amuse his listeners and never allowed his speeches to bore them. The Alliance was always urging on the Government and public opinion against the drink traffic, and it became clear that something must be done to regulate the trade. Mr. Bruce, the Home Secretary, brought in a Bill which the Alliance condemned as feebleness, and which the publicans resented as oppression. The Bill increased the penalties for drunkenness, and shortened the hours during which public-houses might be kept open on Sundays and on week days as well. The effect of the passing of this measure was to throw the publicans into open hostility to the Government. The publicans had an old grudge against Mr. Gladstone himself. In former days he had been guilty of passing a measure which allowed the light wines of France to be sold in bottles by the grocers, and drunk in pastry-cook shops and refreshment houses; and the publicans highly disapproved of such innovations on the traditional ways of the British constitution. Some of their advocates indeed had denounced with a generous ardour the policy which would promote intemperance by allowing anyone but a public-house keeper to sell a glass of wine. The debaucheries of the pastry-cook shops were described in language that recalled the days of Colonel Sibthorp's prognostications as to the corrupting influence of French wines and French morals. Mr. Bruce's Licensing Act was a new wrong charged at the door of Mr. Gladstone. Gin Lane and Beer Street rose in rebellion against him. The publicans were a numerous body; they were well organised; the network of their trade and their Association spread all over the kingdom. The hostile feelings of some were perhaps not unnaturally embittered by the fact that many speakers and writers treated all publicans alike, made no distinction between the reputable and the disreputable, and involved in a common condemnation honest 'Mine Host of the Garter,' and rogueish Boniface of 'The Beaux' Stratagem.' It was well known that a large proportion of the publicans carried on a respectable trade, and were losers rather than gainers by drunkenness. Yet in many instances these men found themselves classed with the owners of the most disreputable gin-palaces, with persons who flourished on the viciousness and the degradation of their

fellow-creatures. The natural result of indiscriminate attack was to cause an indiscriminate alliance for the purposes of defence.

These were difficulties thickening across the path of Mr. Gladstone's Government. All the time, too, a sullen suspicion prevailed among many classes that there had been a lowering of the national pride. Many men regarded the reopening of the Treaty of Paris as a triumph for Russia at the expense of England, and the Washington Treaty as a submission of this country to the arrogance of the United States. No one undertook to say that there was anything the Government could have done other than what they did; but the world must have changed indeed, when men will cease to associate a Government with the untoward events that occur during its time, or to hold the minister who has to make the apology responsible for the humiliation which a moralist would see in the original fault, and not in the atonement.

The establishment of a republic in France could not be without its influence on English politics. A certain amount of more or less vague republican sentiment is always afloat on the surface of English radicalism. For some time before the founding of the French Republic, this vague sentiment had been undergoing a crystallising and strengthening process under the influence of two causes; the success of the North in America, and the gradual degradation of the French Empire under Napoleon III. De Tocqueville had observed long before that the great doubt he felt as to the stability of the American Republic was on the question whether it could stand the stress of a great war. Now it had stood the stress of a great war and had come out all the stronger for the trial. Imperial France, or rather the empire imposed on France, had come for a moment into peril of collision with the American Republic, and had gone down before it without even making an effort to maintain its arrogant attitude. Facts like these naturally produced a distinct impression upon certain classes in England. The establishment of the French Republic now came as a climax. We have already spoken of the great meetings which were held in London, and in most of the English cities, to express sympathy with the struggling republic; and at some of these meetings a good deal of very outspoken republicanism made itself heard. There could be no doubt that a considerable proportion of the working men in the cities were republicans in sentiment. English writers who were not by any means of the sentimental school, but on the contrary were somewhat hard and cold in their dogmatism, began to publish articles in 'advanced' reviews and magazines, distinctly pointing out the logical superiority of the republican theory. Men were already discussing the possibility of a declared republican party being formed both in and out of Parliament.

Not indeed, a party clamouring for the instant pulling down of the monarchy; no one thought of that; but a party which would avow itself republican in principle, and acknowledge that its object was to bring about such a change in public sentiment as might prepare the way for a republic in the time to come. Mr. Frederic Harrison, a writer of ability and reputation, declared in one of the reviews that the adoption of the republican form of government by the English people at some time or other, was as certain as 'the rising of to-morrow's sun.' Of course there have always been republican sentiments among certain classes of Englishmen; and any breath of change on the Continent is sure to fan them into a little flame that flickers for a while. This time, however, many people thought that the sentiment was really going to convert itself into a principle, and that the principle might see itself represented by a political party.

France, which had given the impulse, gave also the shock that brought reaction. The wild theories, the monstrous excesses, the preposterous theatricism of the Paris Commune had a very chilling effect on the ardour of English republicans. The movement in England had, however, one or two curious episodes before it sank into quiescence.

In March 1872, Sir Charles Dilke brought on a motion, in the House of Commons, for enquiring into the manner in which the income and allowances of the Crown are expended. Sir Charles Dilke had been for some months of the preceding autumn the best abused man in Great Britain. His name appeared over and over again in the daily papers. He monopolised for weeks the first leading article in every journal. The comic papers caricatured 'Citizen Dilke' every week. In the theatrical burlesques, his name was the signal for all manner of drolleries and buffooneries. The telegraph-wires carried his doings and speeches everywhere. American correspondents 'interviewed' him, and pictured him as the future President of England. He went round the towns of the North of England, delivering a lecture on the expenses of royalty; and his progress was marked by more or less serious riots everywhere. Life was sacrificed in more than one of these tumults. A Paris journal described his progress as a sort of civil war. The working men of London and of the North held great meetings to express their approval of his principles and conduct, and to pass resolutions in support of the young baronet who had dared to condemn the expenses of royalty, and to avow himself a republican. Many people really thought that for good or ill the vague, fluent, incoherent movement towards republicanism in England had found its leader at last—that the hour had come and the man. To increase and perplex the excitement, the Prince of Wales fell ill, and if

Sir Charles Dilke had personally caused his illness he could not have been more bitterly denounced by some speakers and writers. He was represented as a monster of disloyalty, who had chosen to assail the Queen (against whom it is only fair to say he had never uttered a disparaging word) while her eldest son lay struggling with death. The Prince of Wales, given over by all the doctors, recovered; and in the outburst of public gladness and loyalty that followed his restoration to health, Sir Charles Dilke was almost forgotten. But he had been challenged to repeat in the House of Commons the statements that he had made in the country. He answered the challenge by bringing forward the motion to enquire into the manner in which the income and allowances of the Crown were spent. There was unmistakable courage in the cool, steady way in which he rose to propose his motion. He faced his houseful of antagonists with dogged calmness. It is a hard trial to the nerves to face such an audience. Sir Charles Dilke knew that everyone in that House, save three or four alone, was bitterly opposed to him. He knew that the most overpowering eloquence was to pour out on him the moment he had finished his speech. But neither then nor after did he show the slightest sign of quailing. His speech was well got up as to facts, well arranged, and evidently well committed to memory, but it was not eloquent. The House began to grow apathetic before Sir Charles Dilke had nearly finished his address. The warmth of Mr. Gladstone's reply was almost startling by sheer force of contrast to Sir C. Dilke's quiet, dry, and laboured style. No one expected that Mr. Gladstone would be so passionately merciless as he proved to be. His vehemence, forcing the House into hot temper again, was one cause at least of the extraordinary tumult that arose when Sir C. Dilke's friend and ally, Mr. Auberon Herbert, rose to speak, and declared himself also a republican. This was the signal for as extraordinary a scene as the House of Commons has ever exhibited. The tumult became so great, that if it had taken place at any public meeting, it would have been called a riot, and would have required the interference of the police. Some hundreds of strong, excited, furious men were shouting and yelling with the object of interrupting the speech and drowning the voice of one man. The Speaker of the House of Commons is usually an omnipotent authority. Seldom indeed does anyone presume to question his decision or to utter a word when he enjoins silence. One of the peculiarities of the House of Commons which all strangers admire, is the respect and deference it usually shows to the president whom it has itself chosen. But on this occasion the Speaker was literally powerless. 'What care these roarers for the name of king?' asks the boatswain in 'The Tempest,' as he points to the furious waves. What cared the roarers in

the House of Commons for the name of Speaker? There was no authority which could overawe them. They were all men of education and position—university men, younger sons of peers, great landowners, officers in crack cavalry regiments, the very *élite*, most of them, of the English aristocracy. But they became for the moment a merely furious mob. They roared, hissed, gesticulated with the fury of a sixpenny gallery disappointed in some boxing-night performance. The shrill 'cock-crow,' unheard in the House of Commons for a whole generation, shrieked once more in the ears of the bewildered officials. Probably nobody now reads Samuel Warren's once popular novel 'Ten Thousand a Year,' but those who did read it long ago may remember that when Mr. Tittlebat Titmouse got into Parliament, his one only contribution to debate was his admirable and distracting imitation of the crowing of a cock. Everyone supposed that Titmouse and his ways were dead and gone; but it would positively seem that some of his kith and kin were alive and in good voice that night in the House of Commons.

The debate was chiefly remarkable for the fact that it noted the exact level to which the republican sentiment had arisen in English political society. Three members of the House of Commons acknowledged, in more or less qualified terms, their theoretical preference for the republican form of government. These were Sir C. Dilke, Mr. Auberon Herbert, and Professor Fawcett. There were, doubtless, some other men in the House who sympathised with republican principles, but who, well convinced that the monarchy had hitherto suited England and was not likely to be soon changed, gave themselves no more trouble about the matter than if it were some purely speculative question. Such men could not be called republicans. The name could only be given to the few who frankly declared that they would prefer to see England a republic, and even to these it must be given only in a qualified sense. Not one of them was anxious to see any sudden change. Not one of them was even inclined to set on foot any agitation for the propagation of republican principles. The excesses of the Commune and the illness of the Prince of Wales were combining influences too strong for theory to contend against.

Nothing more was then heard of republicanism in England. It was clear that there was no republican party, properly so called, in the country. Some of the 'philosophical Radicals,' who were most strongly republican in sentiment and conviction, declared in the most explicit words that they would not make the slightest effort to agitate in favour of a republic; that they did not think the difference between a republic and the British Constitution was worth the trouble of a long agitation. If a republic were to come, they said, it would come in good time. England could afford to

wait. When this philosophical mood of mind prevailed among republicans it was clear that the question of a republic had not, as the phrase is, 'come up.' Mr. Bright expressed his opinion on the subject with his usual blunt good sense. Some one wrote to him, asking him what he thought of republicanism. Mr. Bright replied that, 'as to opinions on the question of monarchy or republicanism, I hope and believe it will be a long time before we are asked to give our opinion. Our ancestors decided the matter a good while since, and I would suggest that you and I should leave any further decision to our posterity.' The whole condition of things was fairly set out in Mr. Bright's letter. There was no practical question then as to the relative advantages of monarchy and republic. If that question is to come up at some time, it had not come up then.

A new figure did, however, arise about that time in English politics. It was one less expected than even the portentous form of a cosmopolitan republican. It was that of the English agricultural labourer as a political agitator and member of a trades union. For years and years the working man in cities had been a conspicuous personage. He had played an influential part in every agitation. Orators had pleaded for him and sought his applause; statesmen had paid court to him; the newspapers were always filled with him; his trades unions were a scare to half society; he figured in novels, in poetry, in satire; he was positively beginning to be a sort of fourth power in the State. All the while the rural labourer was supposed to be entirely out of the play. No one troubled about him. When he appeared in the papers it was only as the subject of some horrifying paragraph about the miseries of a labourer's family, who, nine in number, had all to sleep in one room, four of the unfortunate group being afflicted with fever or small-pox. Sometimes a London newspaper sent down a special correspondent to explore the condition of some village, and he wrote back descriptions which made the flesh creep and the blood run cold. Let anyone picture to himself a poorly-fed, half-clad, and wholly ignorant family of eight or nine, including, say two grown young men and two grown young women, who habitually slept in one room, and in not a few instances in one bed. Let him think of all this, and imagine what the worst consequences must be, and his imagination will probably have fallen short of the fearful reality. That was the rural labourer at his worst. At his best he seemed a picture of hard-working, cleanly, patient, and almost hopeless poverty. Mr. Disraeli and the Tory landlords said he was too contented and happy to need a change; most other people thought that he was rendered too stolid by the monotonous misery of his condition. Suddenly in the spring of 1872, not long after the opening of Parliament, vague rumours began to reach London of a movement of some

kind among the labourers of South Warwickshire. It was first reported that they had asked for an increase of wages, then that they were actually forming a labourers' union, after the pattern of the artisans; then that they were on strike. There came accounts of meetings of rural labourers —meetings positively where men made speeches. Instantly the London papers sent down their special correspondents, and for weeks the movement among the agricultural labourers of South Warwickshire—the country of Shakespeare—became the sensation of London. The Geneva Arbitration, which was then giving Parliament something to talk about every night, was thrown into the shade. Even the Tichborne case, the civil part of which had just come to a close, did not divert public attention altogether from the agitation among the rural labourers. How the thing first came about is not very clear. But it seems that in one of the South Warwickshire villages was a wonderful man—a labourer who had travelled, a wanderer who had seen men and cities. This adventurous man had led a wild life; he had travelled out of his native village, away, far away, quite into the next county, and even it was reported into the county beyond that, and had seen strange and unfamiliar ways of life. He had been in the iron manufacturing regions, the Black Country, and he had heard about strikes, and had been present at meetings of grimy working men, who talked out and made their demands as boldly as the masters themselves could do. The wanderer returned to his native village, and he told of the wonders he had seen, and perhaps found incredulous listeners. But there came a somewhat harder time than usual in South Warwickshire. The wages of eight or ten shillings a week utterly failed to keep up the family. There was sad and sullen talk of starvation. The farmers refused to give higher wages, declaring that the rents they had to pay to the great landlords would not allow them. The great landlords said they got no more than their land was worth, and that they could do nothing. Meanwhile it was evident that the farmers had plenty to eat, drink and wear, that the landlords were living rather better than most princes, and that the labourer was on the verge of starvation. The travelled man whispered in his village the one word 'Strike.' The thing took fire somehow. A few men accepted it at once. In the neighbouring village was a man who, although only a day labourer, had been long accustomed to act as a volunteer preacher of Methodism, and who by his superior intelligence, his good character, and his effective way of talking, had acquired a great influence among his fellows. This man was Joseph Arch. He was consulted and he approved of the notion. He was asked if he would get together a meeting and make a speech, and he consented. Calling a meeting of day labourers then was almost as bold a step as pro-

claiming a revolution. Yet it was done somehow. There were no circulars, no placards, none of the machinery which we all associate with the getting up of a meeting. The news had to be passed on by word of mouth that a meeting was to be held and where, the incredulous had to be convinced that there was really to be a meeting, the timid had to be prevailed on to take courage and go. The meeting was held under a great chestnut tree, which thereby acquired a sort of fame. There a thousand labourers came together and were addressed by Joseph Arch. He carried them all with him. His one great idea—great and bold to them, simple and small to us—was to form a labourers' union like the trades' unions of the cities. The idea was taken up with enthusiasm. New branches were formed every day. Arch kept on holding meetings and addressing crowds. The whole movement passed, naturally and necessarily, into his hands. How completely it was a rural labourers' movement, how little help or guidance it received in its origin from other sources, how profoundly isolated from the outer and active world was its scene, may be understood from the fact that it was nearly six weeks in action before its very existence was known in London. Then the special correspondents went down to the spot, and turned a blaze of light on it. Mr. Auberon Herbert, Mr. Edward Jenkins, and other active reformers, appeared on the scene and threw themselves into the movement. Meetings were held in various villages, and Mr. Arch found himself in the constant companionship of members of Parliament, leaders of political organisations, and other unwonted associates. The good sense of the sturdy labourer never forsook the leader of the movement, nor did he ever show any inclination to subordinate his enterprise to any political agitation. The danger apprehended by many, that the rural labourers would allow their organisation simply to drift in the wake of the mere political agitators, proved to be unreal. The labourers took the help of Mr. Herbert and Sir C. Dilke, and of Mr. Odger and Mr. George Potter, so far as the mere conduct of the organisation was concerned, but they did not show any inclination to allow their project to expand as yet beyond its simple and natural limits. On the other hand, it was clear that, so far as the labourers had any political sympathies, they were with Liberalism and against Toryism. This too was a little surprise for the public. Most persons had supposed that a race of beings brought up for generations under the exclusive tutorship of the landlord, the vicar, and the wives of the landlords and the vicars, would have had any political tendencies they possessed drilled and drummed into the grooves of Toryism. The shock of surprise with which the opposite idea impressed itself upon the minds of the Conservative squires found ready and angry expression. The land-

lords in most places declared themselves against the movement of the labourers. Some of them denounced it in unmeasured language. Mr. Disraeli at once sprang to the front as the champion of feudal aristocracy and the British country squire. The one great delight of the author of 'Vivian Grey' when he was not engaged in Parliament, was to play at being a country squire. In Scott's 'Guy Mannering,' the attorney Gilbert Glossin, who has managed to get possession of an estate, makes it his grand ambition to pass off for a country gentleman, and once gives a beggar half-a-crown because the knowing vagrant has accosted him as 'Ellangowan,' according to the old-fashioned Scottish custom which declares it the privilege of the landlord to be addressed by the name of his estate. Mr. Disraeli seemed to have the same ambition. In birth, in nationality, in mental training, in appearance, in his instinctive way of looking at things, he was essentially a foreigner in English society. Of all classes of English society, that with which by intellect, temperament, and training he might be expected to have the least sympathy was the English landlord class. Yet it seemed that his pride was to be considered an English landlord, or rather to be mistaken for an English landlord. It used to be a remarkable sight to see Mr. Disraeli presiding on certain occasions of annual celebration when, by the bounty and subscriptions of some of the landlords, the prize of a blue coat with brass buttons was to be conferred on the venerable labourer who had for the longest number of years contrived to support the largest family without having recourse to parish relief. The dignified gravity with which Mr. Disraeli admonished and blessed the happy recipient of this noble prize; the seeming assumption that a long life of privation and labour was well worth any true man's endurance for the glory of being publicly endued, at the age of seventy-five, with a remarkably high-collared blue swallow-tail coat, the indignant repudiation of the unworthy levity of persons in London, newspaper-writers and such like, who tried to make this ceremonial seem ridiculous; all this made up a performance, of which caricature itself could hardly exaggerate the peculiarities. Joseph Arch himself mentioned in a speech the unlucky fact that one of the fortunate rustics who had actually been rewarded with this Monthyon prize, one of the proud wearers of this singular robe of honour, had been compelled after all to seek shelter in the workhouse, where they probably would not allow him to parade in the brass-buttoned blue coat even on Sundays. However that may be, Mr. Disraeli was none the less entitled and none the less willing to constitute himself the champion of the country squires, and when the agitation became public he stood forward to vindicate and glorify the impugned state of things. Mr. Disraeli insisted that everything was as it ought to be, and that the English

labourer in the Midland and Southern Counties was but another Corydon in an English Arcadia, piping for very happiness as though, like the shepherd boy in Sir Philip Sidney's tale, he could never grow old. The controversy was taken up in the House of Commons, and served, if it did nothing else, to draw all the more attention to the condition of the British labourer. An amusing little side controversy arose between Mr. Newdegate and Mr. Arch's party. As a landlord and a Tory of the Tories, Mr. Newdegate was of course an opponent of the labourers' strike. It so happened that at one of the public meetings in London, where Joseph Arch spoke, Cardinal Manning was likewise a speaker. That was enough for Mr. Newdegate. He immediately proclaimed his discovery of a new Popish plot, and bluntly charged Mr. Arch with being a disguised emissary and agent of the Jesuits. Poor Arch, who so short a time before was only an obscure labourer with a turn for preaching methodism in a little country village, found himself acclaimed by half England as the apostle of a new social revolution, and denounced by the Tories generally as the pioneer of a lawless Jacquerie; he heard his name mentioned every day in the speeches of statesmen and the debates in Parliament; he had to defend himself against the charge of being a secret agent of the Vatican, and to disclaim any intention of conducting an agitation for the establishment of a republic.

One indirect but necessary result of the agitation was to call attention to the injustice done to the rural population when they were left unenfranchised at the time of the passing of the last Reform Bill. The injustice was strongly pressed upon the Government, and Mr. Gladstone frankly acknowledged that it would be impossible to allow things to remain long in their anomalous state. In truth, when the Reform Bill was passed nobody supposed that the rural population were capable of making any use of a vote. Therefore the movement which began in Warwickshire took two directions when the immediate effects of the partial strike were over. A permanent union of labourers was formed corresponding generally in system with the organisations of the cities. The other direction was distinctly political. The rural population through their leaders joined with the reformers of the cities for the purpose of obtaining an equal franchise in town and country; in other words, for the enfranchisement of the peasantry. The emancipation of the rural labourers began under that chestnut tree where the first meeting answered the appeals of Joseph Arch. The English peasant was the newest and latest figure on the political stage of the world. He followed the Virginian negro, and he came long after the Russian serf. Unlike these however he had for his leader no greater man than one of his own class. The rough and ready peasant preacher Joseph

Arch had probably little idea when he began his speech under the chestnut tree, that he was speaking the first words of a new chapter of the country's history.

A few lines ought perhaps to be spared to the Tichborne trial which has just been mentioned. A claim was suddenly made upon the Tichborne baronetcy and estates by a man who came from Australia and who announced himself as the heir to the title and the property. He declared that he was the Sir Roger Tichborne who was supposed to have gone down with the wreck of the *Bella*, sailing from Rio in South America years before. The Tichborne case is certainly one of the most remarkable instances of disputed identity on record. Just now the most wonderful thing about it seems to be the extraordinary amount of popular sympathy and credit which 'the Claimant,' as he was called, contrived to secure. He was undoubtedly an impostor; that is, if the most overwhelming accumulation of evidence, positive and negative, could establish any fact. The person who presented himself as the long-lost Roger Tichborne bore not the slightest resemblance to the young man who sailed in the *Bella* and was believed to have perished with her. 'The Claimant' was indeed curiously unlike what people remembered Roger Tichborne, not only in face but in figure and in manners. A slender, delicate, somewhat feeble young man, of fair although not finished education, who had always lived in good society and showed it in his language and bearing, went down in the *Bella* or at least disappeared with her; and thirteen years afterwards there came from Australia a man of enormous bulk, ignorant to an almost inconceivable degree of ignorance, and who if he were Roger Tichborne had not only forgotten all the manners of his class but had forgotten the very names of many of those with whom he ought to have been most familiar, including the name of his own mother; and this man presented himself as the lost heir and claimed the property. If this were the whole story, it might be said that there was nothing particularly wonderful in it. A preposterous attempt was made to carry on an imposture, and it failed; such things happen every day; in this case the attempt was only a little more outrageous and ridiculous than in others. But the really strange part of the tale is to come. Despite all the obvious arguments against the Claimant, it is certain that his story was believed by the mother of Roger Tichborne, and by a considerable number of persons of undoubted veracity and intelligence who had known Roger Tichborne in his youth. True, it seems impossible that a slender Prince Hal could in a few years grow into a Falstaff. But so much the more difficult must it surely have been for the Falstaff to persuade people that he was actually the Prince Hal. So much the more wonderful is it that he did actually succeed in persuading

many into full belief in himself and his story. The man who claimed to be Roger Tichborne utterly failed to make out his claim in a Court of Law. It was shown upon the clearest evidence that he had gradually put together and built up around him a whole system of imposture. He was then put on trial for his frauds, found guilty and sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude. Yet thousands of ignorant persons, and some persons not at all ignorant, continued, and to this day continue, to believe in him. He became the figure-head of a new and grotesque agitation. His own imposture was the parent and the patron of other impostures. His story opens up a far more curious study of human credulity than that of Johanna Southcote, or that of Mary Tofts, or Perkin Warbeck, or the Cock Lane Ghost.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE FALL OF THE GREAT ADMINISTRATION.

The first few days of 1873 were marked by an event which, had it occurred four or five years before, would have filled the world with a profound sensation. Happening as it did it made comparatively little stir in the political waters. It was the death of Louis Napoleon, late Emperor of the French, at his house in Chislehurst, Kent. After his imprisonment, if it can be called so, at Wilhelmshohe, in Cassel, where he was treated as an honoured guest rather than a captive, the fallen Emperor came to England. He settled with his wife and son at Chislehurst, and lived in dignified semi-retirement. The Emperor became a sort of favourite with the public here. A reaction seemed to have set in against the dread and dislike with which he had at one time being regarded. He enjoyed a certain amount of popularity. He sometimes showed himself in public; as for example at a lecture given by Mr. Stanley, the adventurous New York 'special correspondent' who had gone out to Africa and discovered Dr. Livingstone. Louis Napoleon had for a long time been in sinking health. His life had been overwrought in every way. He had lived many lives in a comparatively short space of time. Most of his friends had long been expecting his death from week to week, almost from day to day. He died on January 9. The event created no great sensation. Perhaps even the news of his death was but an anti-climax after the news of his fall. For twenty years he had filled a space in the eyes of the world with which the importance of no man else could pretend to compare. His political bulk had

towered up in European affairs like some huge castle dominating over a city. All the earth listened to the lightest word he spoke. For good or evil his influence and his name were potent in every corner of the globe. His nod convulsed continents. His arms glittered from the Crimea to Cochin-China, from Algeria to Mexico. A signal from him and the dominion of the Austrians over Lombardy was broken at Solferino, and a new Italy arose on the horizon of Europe. A whisper from him, and Maximilian of Austria hastens across the ocean in hope to found a Mexican Empire, in reality to find a premature grave. A wave of his hand, and Garibaldi is crushed at Mentana. What wonder if such a man should at one time have come to believe himself the special favourite and the spoilt child of destiny? The whole condition of things seemed changed when Louis Napoleon fell at Sedan. Some forty years of wandering, of obscurity, of futile, almost ludicrous enterprises, of exile, of imprisonment, of the world's contempt, and then twenty years of splendid success, of supreme sovereignty, had led him to this—to the disgrace of Sedan, to the quiet fading days of Chislehurst. He had overshadowed France and Europe with 'the gloom of his glory,' and now, to borrow John Evelyn's words, 'is all in the dust.' In one of his Napoleonic ballads Beranger, speaking of the fall of the first Emperor, bitterly declares that the Kings of Europe who despise him in his exile once crawled round his throne, and still bear on their brows the traces of the dust which his footprint left when he set his conqueror's heel upon their heads. Europe had certainly at one time shown an inclination to grovel before Louis Napoleon's throne. He was regarded as a statesman of mysterious, infallible, superhuman wisdom. He was understood to be a Brutus who had for a long time professed idiotcy in order to conceal inspiration. When he fell, the world shook its wise head pityingly, and seemed inclined to fall back upon the opinion that it must have been only idiotcy trying to assume the oracular ways of inspiration. Towards the closing days there was a revival of a kindlier feeling and a fairer judgment. Louis Napoleon had in his early and obscure days lived in lodgings in King Street, St. James's, and when he became a great Emperor a tablet was set up in the outer wall of the house to inform all the world of the fact. He came to London in the zenith of his power and his fame, and he drove by the house and looked at the tablet and said something oracular and appropriate no doubt, and the newspapers chronicled the event, and the world admired. When he came back again after Sedan there was no account of his driving past the old place, if he did so. But the tablet had not been taken down; it is only right to say that much. It was allowed to remain there even though Louis Napoleon had fallen never to hope again. Perhaps we cannot better illus-

trate the manner in which the English public received him on his late return. There was no further allusion to the tablet; but it was not taken down.

Death was very busy about this time with men whose names had made deep mark on history or letters. Lord Lytton, the brilliant novelist, the successful dramatist, the composer of marvellous Parliamentary speeches, died on January 18, 1873. Dr. Livingstone, the famous missionary and explorer, had hardly been discovered among the living by the enterprise and energy of Mr. Stanley when the world learned that he was dead. So many false reports of his death had been sent about at different times that the statement was now received with incredulity. The truth had to be confirmed on testimony beyond dispute before England would accept the fact that the long career of devotion to the one pursuit was over, and that Africa had had another victim. John Stuart Mill died on May 8, 1873, at his home at Avignon, where the tomb of his wife was made. 'There's a great spirit gone,' was the word of all men. A loftier and purer soul, more truly devoted to the quest of the truth, had not mingled in the worldly affairs of our time. There were clear evidences in the later writings of Mr. Mill, published after his death, that he had been turning towards a different point in quest of the truth from that on which early training and long habit had formerly fixed his mind. His influence over the thought and the culture of his day was immense. Time has even already begun to show it in some decay; but most of Mr. Mill's writings may safely be regarded as the possession of all the future, and he has left an example of candour in investigation and fearless moral purpose in action such as might well leaven even the most thoughtless and cynical generation. A sudden accident, the stumble of a horse, brought to a close, on July 19, the career of the Bishop of Winchester, the many-sided, energetic, eloquent Samuel Wilberforce. He had tried to succeed in everything, and he went near success. He tried to know everybody and understand everybody's way of looking at every question. He was a great pulpit and Parliamentary orator, a great bishop, a wit, a scholar, an accomplished man of the world. In a different and more honourable sense than that conveyed in Dryden's famous line, he 'was everything by starts;' but he was a good man and good minister always. On the very day after the death of the Bishop of Winchester died Lord Westbury, who had been Lord Chancellor, a man of great ability, unsurpassed as a lawyer in his time, endowed with as bitter a tongue and as vitriolic a wit as ever cursed their possessor. Lord Westbury was a failure in spite of all his gifts, partly because of a certain want of moral elevation in his nature. It is only justice to his memory to say that he was in many ways the victim of the errors of some to whom

his affections made him too lenient. From one cause and another the close of his career became but a heap of ruins. The deaths of Sir Edwin Landseer, the painter, Sir Henry Holland, the famous physician and traveller, whose patients and personal friends were Emperors, Kings, Presidents, and Prime Ministers, and of Professor Sedgwick, the geologist, ought to be mentioned. Nor must we omit from our death roll the name of Dr. Lushington, who, in addition to his own personal distinction, is likely to be remembered as the depositary of a secret confided to him in an earlier generation by Lady Byron, the secret of the charge she had to make against her husband. The whole story was revived before Dr. Lushington's death by a painful controversy, but he refused even by a yes or no to reveal Lady Byron's confidence.

The year which saw so many deaths was a trying time for the Liberal Government. The session of that year would in any case have brought them over what may be called the grand climacteric of the Parliament. The novelty of the reforming administration was well-nigh worn off, and there was yet some work which Mr. Gladstone was pledged to do. Here and there, when it happened that the death or retirement of a member of Parliament gave an opportunity for a new election, it seemed of late to happen that the election went generally against the Government. The Conservatives were plucking up a spirit everywhere, and were looking closely after their organisation. Mr. Disraeli himself had taken to going round the country, doing what would be called in America stump oratory, and doing it remarkably well. In the Crystal Palace of London, in the Free Trade Hall and the Pomona Gardens of Manchester, in the Conservative Association of Glasgow, and in other places he had addressed great assemblages and denounced and ridiculed the Liberal Government. In the Manchester Free Trade Hall he made use of a remarkably happy expression. His rivals had entered into office, he said, with a policy of violence, of sacrilege, and of confiscation, and now having done their work they sat in a row on the Treasury benches reminding him as he gazed across the table at them 'of a range of extinct volcanoes.' The Government had been unlucky in the naval department; some of their ships had met with fatal accidents; and it was complained that there was defective organisation and imperfect inspection. In one of his speeches, Mr. Disraeli had spoken of a new difficulty in Irish politics and a new form of agitation that had arisen in Ireland. The Home Rule organisation had sprung suddenly into existence.

The Home Rule agitation came, in its first organised form, mainly from the inspiration of Irish Protestants. The disestablishment of the Church had filled most of the Protestants of Ireland with hatred of Mr.

Gladstone, and distrust of the Imperial Parliament and English parties. It was therefore thought by some of them that the time had come when Irishmen of all sects and parties had better trust to themselves and to their united efforts than to any English Minister, Parliament, or party. Partly in a petulant mood, partly in despondency, partly out of genuine patriotic impulse, some of the Irish Protestants set going the movement for Home Rule. But although the actual movement came into being in that way, the desire for a native Parliament had always lived among large classes of the Irish people. Attempts were always being made to construct something like a regular organisation with such an object. The process of pacification was going on but slowly. It could only be slow in any case; the effects of centuries of bad legislation could not by any human possibility be effaced by two or three years of better government. But there were many Irishmen who, themselves patient and moderate, saw with distinctness that the feeling of disaffection, or at least of discontent, among the Irish people was not to be charmed away even by such measures as the Disestablishment of the Irish Church. They saw what English statesmen would not or could not see, that the one strong feeling in the breast of a large proportion of the population of Ireland was dislike to the rule of an English Parliament. The national sentiment, rightly or wrongly, for good or ill, had grown so powerful that it could not be overcome by mere concessions in this or that detail of legislation. These Irishmen of moderate views felt convinced that there were only two alternatives before England; either she must give back to Ireland some form of national Parliament, or she must go on putting down rebellion after rebellion, and dealing with Ireland as Russia had dealt with Poland. They therefore welcomed the Home Rule movement, and conscientiously believed that it would open the way to a genuine reconciliation between England and Ireland on conditions of fair co-partnership. The author of this history is, for obvious reasons, not inclined to discuss here the merits of the Home Rule demand. But he desires to put it on historical record that those who were chiefly concerned in promoting that movement were filled with the conviction that the principle of Home Rule contained the solution of the great problem of government which unsolved had so long divided England and Ireland, and offered a means of complete reconciliation between the two countries.

Several Irish elections took place about the time when the Home Rule movement had been fairly started. They were fought out on the question for or against Home Rule; and the Home Rulers were successful. The leadership of the new party came almost as a matter of course into the hands of Mr. Butt, who returned to Parliament after a considerable time of exile from political life. Mr. Butt was a man of great ability, legal

knowledge, and historical culture. He had begun life as a Conservative and an opponent of O'Connell. He had become one of the orators of the short-lived attempt at a Protectionist reaction in England. He was taken up by the leading Protectionists, who were themselves somewhat deficient in intellect and eloquence, and who could not induce men like Mr. Disraeli to trouble themselves any more about the lost cause. Mr. Butt was a lawyer of great skill and success in his profession; as an advocate he had for years not a rival at the Irish bar. He had taken part in the defence of Smith O'Brien and Meagher at Clonmel, in 1848; and when the Fenian movements broke out, he undertook the defence of many Fenian prisoners. He became gradually drawn away from Conservatism, and brought round to Nationalism. For some reason or other the Conservative chiefs had neglected him. There is extant a letter from a once conspicuous and clever unofficial Conservative, in which, among other pieces of advice to a leader of the party, he recommends him to 'buy Butt.' The frank cynicism of the advice was a proof that the writer did not understand Mr. Butt. It is certain that Mr. Butt was not a prudent man, and that he did not manage his private affairs well. There can be no doubt that he often fell into embarrassments which might have made observers think he would have welcomed any means of extrication; but it is certain that he was politically honest even to chivalrous forgetfulness of his own most legitimate interests. Perhaps the neglect of the Conservative chiefs came from their observation of the fact that Mr. Butt was gradually passing over from their side; perhaps it was due to other and personal causes. Mr. Butt dropped entirely out of public life for a while; and when he reappeared it was as the leader of the new Home Rule movement. There was not then in Irish politics any man who could pretend to be his rival. He was a speaker at once powerful and plausible; he had a thorough knowledge of the constitutional history and the technical procedures of Parliament, and he could talk to an Irish monster meeting with vivacity and energy. Almost in a moment a Regular Home Rule party was set up in the House of Commons. Popular Irish members who had been elected previous to the organisation of the movement gave in their adhesion to it; and there was in fact a sudden revival of the constitutional movement for the satisfaction of Irish national claims which had fallen asleep after the death of O'Connell and the failure of the Young Ireland Rebellion of 1848.

The Home Rule movement unquestionably put Mr. Gladstone in a new difficulty. The press and the public men of England failed altogether at first to appreciate the strength of the demand for Home Rule. Many voices cried out that no English statesman must listen to it, not to say

condescend to argue with it; it was to be simply brushed away as a nuisance; bidden like a fretful child to hold its tongue and go to sleep. Mr. Gladstone was not a man to deal with political questions in that sort of way. He showed an anxiety to understand the new agitation and its objects. He asked questions of one or two prominent Irishmen; he even answered questions civilly addressed to him; he showed a willingness at least to receive information with regard to Home Rule. In the eyes of some jealous patriots in England such conduct was in itself a tampering with the question, an encouragement of the agitation, and a conniving at the designs of wicked men who were anxious to dismember the empire. It was now certain that when Parliament met, an organised Home Rule party would be found there; and a good many strong Conservatives and weak Liberals were inclined to hold Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy responsible for the uprise of this new agitation. There seemed to be an idea that if Irishmen got any measure of justice accorded to them they ought not to ask for anything more; and that if they were so perverse and ungrateful as to ask for more, a large part of the guilt of their ingratitude must be put to the account of the minister who had been wrongheaded enough to give them any justice at all. The prospects were on the whole growing somewhat ominous for the Liberal Government. Not only the Conservative party were plucking up a spirit, but the House of Lords had more than once made it clear that they felt themselves emboldened to deal as they thought fit with measures sent up to them from the House of Commons. When the peers begin to be firm and assert their dignity, it may always be taken for granted that there is not much popular force at the back of the Government.

Parliament met on February 6, 1873. The Royal Speech announced that 'A measure will be submitted to you on an early day, for settling the question of university education in Ireland. It will have for its object the advancement of learning in that portion of my dominions, and will be framed with a careful regard to the rights of conscience.' On February 13, Mr. Gladstone introduced his measure. It is a remarkable illustration of the legislative energy with which the Government were even yet filled, that on the very same night, at the very same hour, two great schemes of reform, reform that to slow and timid minds must have seemed something like revolution, were introduced into Parliament. One was the Irish University Education Bill, which Mr. Gladstone was explaining in the House of Commons; the other was a measure to abolish the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, and establish a judicial Court of Appeal in its stead. This latter measure was introduced by Lord Selborne, lately Sir Roundell Palmer, who had been raised to the office of Lord Chancellor,

on the resignation of Lord Hatherley, whose eyesight was temporarily affected. Great as the change was which Lord Selborne proposed to introduce, public attention paid comparatively little heed to it at that moment. Everyone watched with eager interest the development of Mr. Gladstone's most critical scheme for the improvement of university education in Ireland. Irish university education was indeed in a very anomalous condition. Ireland had two universities: that of Dublin, which was then a distinctly Protestant institution; and the Queen's University, which was established on a strictly secular system, and which the heads of the Catholic Church had on that account condemned. In a country with a population of whom five-sixths were Catholics, there was one chartered university which would not accept the Catholic as such, and another which the Catholic as such could not accept. This is a rough but accurate description of the condition of things. The remedy one might have thought would have been obvious in an ordinary case. The Catholics themselves asked for a chartered Catholic university. The answer made by most Englishmen was, that to grant a charter to a Catholic university would be to run the risk of lowering the national standard of education, and that to grant any State aid to a Catholic university would be to endow a sectarian institution out of the public funds. The Catholic made rejoinder that a mere speculative dread of lowering the common standard of university education was hardly a reason why five-sixths of the population of Ireland should have no university education of that kind at all; that the University of Dublin was in essence a State-endowed institution; and that the Queen's University was founded by State money, on a principle which excluded the vast majority of Catholics from its advantages.

Mr. Gladstone's measure was a gallant and a well-meant effort to reconcile the conflicting claims. He proposed to make the University of Dublin the one central University of the country, and to make it a teaching as well as an examining body. Trinity College, the Colleges of Cork and Belfast, the existing Catholic University, a body supported wholly by private funds and which had no charter, were at once to become members of the new University. The College at Galway was to cease to exist. The theological faculty was to be taken away from Trinity College, Dublin, and handed over to the representative body of the Irish Disestablished Church. The new University was to have no chairs for theology, moral philosophy, or modern history. The governing body of the University was to be composed in the first instance of twenty-eight ordinary members to be nominated in the Act. Vacancies were to be filled by the Crown and by co-optation alternately for ten years; after that time four members were to retire annually, one successor to be named by the Crown, one by

the Council, one by the Professors, and one by the Senate. In addition to the ordinary members, the affiliated colleges would be allowed to elect one or two members of council according to the number of pupils in each college. The money to sustain the university was to come in proportionate allotments from the revenues of Trinity College, a very wealthy institution, from the consolidated fund, the fees of students, and the surplus of Irish ecclesiastical property. Trinity College and each of the other affiliated colleges would be allowed to frame schemes for their own government. Thus therefore Mr. Gladstone proposed to establish in Ireland one central university, to which existing colleges and colleges to exist hereafter might affiliate themselves, and in the governing of which they would have a share, while each college would make what laws it pleased for its own constitution, and might be denominational or undenominational as it thought fit. The legislature would give an open career and fair play to all alike; and in order to make the University equally applicable to every sect, it would not teach disputed branches of knowledge, or allow its examination for prizes to include any of the disputed questions. The colleges could act for themselves with regard to the teaching of theology, moral philosophy, and modern history; the central University would maintain a neutral ground so far as these subjects were concerned, and would have nothing to do with them.

This scheme looked plausible and even satisfactory for a moment. It was met that first night with something like a chorus of approval from those who spoke. But there was an ominous silence in many parts of the House; and after a while the ominous silence began to be very alarmingly broken. The more the scheme was examined the less it seemed to find favour on either side of the House. It was remarked that on the morning after the introduction of the measure, the *Daily News*, a journal which might have been expected to deal favourably with any proposal made by the Government, came out with a criticism which, although courteous and cautious, was decidedly damaging. The defects of the scheme soon became evident. The one great defect was that it satisfied nobody. It proposed to break up and fuse together three or four existing systems, and apparently without the least prospect of satisfying any of the various sects and parties to compose whose strife this great revolution was to be attempted. The English Nonconformists were indignant at the proposal to endow denominational education. The Irish Protestants complained bitterly of the breaking up of the old university system in Dublin. The Catholics declared that the measure did not in any way meet their claims for a Catholic University. The authorities of the Catholic Church in Ireland pronounced decisively against the measure. The men who proclaimed

themselves devoted to culture, sneered at the notion of a national university which professed to have nothing to do with moral philosophy or modern history. It may be remarked that Mr. Mill had already suggested that history is one of the branches of human knowledge which had best be left to private cultivation. It would certainly be difficult to get a theory of modern history in an Irish National University which would be acceptable to all the sects and parties in the country. It is idle to plead that history is the study of facts; in no chapter of history, even the simplest, are the facts so clearly defined as to show the same to all eyes. Two eminent men had just been making a study of the same events in English and Irish history; one particular set of State papers was the subject of each man's examination; on the study of the same set of papers the two men came to diametrically opposite conclusions, not merely as to inference but as to fact. Again, how would it be possible to teach that chapter of history which describes the political career of O'Connell in such a way as to be acceptable to the Ulster Orangeman and the Munster Catholic? Let us fancy the University of London having a chair for the teaching of modern history, and offering prizes for proficiency in an elucidation of the political careers of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Beaconsfield. Yet it does seem as if the difficulty in the way of teaching history from the chair of an Irish National University ought to have been a reason for not attempting under such conditions to set up a central and sole institution of that kind. Was it, in fact, possible that there could be one Irish National University available for all sects and parties? To us it seems that this was not possible, except at such sacrifices of the educational character of the university as to make it of little worth as a permanent institution. There was great justice in the complaint that soon began to be heard from both sides of the House of Commons: 'You are spoiling several institutions, and you are not satisfying the requirements of anybody whatever.'

The agitation against the bill grew and grew. The late Professor Cairnes, then in fast failing health, inspired and guided much of that part of the opposition which condemned the measure because of the depreciating effect it would have on the character of the higher education of Ireland. The English Nonconformists were all against it. The Conservatives were against it, and it soon became evident that the Irish members of Parliament would vote as a body against it for the second reading. The crisis came on an amendment to the motion. The amendment was moved on March 3 by Mr. Bourke, brother of the late Lord Mayo. The debate, which lasted four nights, was brilliant and impassioned. Mr. Disraeli was exulting, and his exultation lent even more than usual spirit to his glittering eloquence. He taunted Mr. Gladstone with having mistaken 'the clamour

of the Nonconformist for the voice of the nation.' 'You have now had four years of it,' he said. 'You have despoiled churches. You have threatened every corporation and every endowment in the country. You have examined into everybody's affairs. You have criticised every profession and vexed every trade. No one is certain of his property, and nobody knows what duties he may have to perform to-morrow. I believe that the people of this country have had enough of the policy of confiscation.' There was, of course, extravagance in these charges, but their very extravagance suited the temper of the House, and Mr. Disraeli understood his audience and its mood.

When Mr. Gladstone rose to speak at the close of the fourth night's debate it soon became evident that he no longer counted on victory. How, indeed, could he? He was opposed and assailed from all sides. He knew that the Senate of the University of Dublin had condemned his measure as well as the Roman Catholic prelates. He had received a deputation of Irish members to announce to him frankly that they could not support him. His speech was in remarkable contrast to the jubilant tones of Mr. Disraeli's defiant and triumphant rhetoric. It was full of dignity and resolve; but it was the dignity of anticipated defeat met without shrinking and without bravado. A few sentences, in which Mr. Gladstone spoke of his severance from the Irish representatives with whom he had worked cordially and successfully on the Church and Land Bills, were full of a genuine and a noble pathos. They touched the heart of many an Irish member who felt all that Ireland owed to the great statesman, but who yet felt conscientiously unable to say that the measure now proposed was equal to the demand of the Irish Catholics. Mr. Gladstone was the first English Prime Minister who had ever really perilled office and popularity to serve the interests of Ireland; it seemed a cruel stroke of fate which made his fall from power mainly the result of the Irish vote in the House of Commons. Such was, however, the fact. The second reading of the bill would have been carried by a large majority if the Irish members, who were unable to give their support, could even have conscientiously refrained from voting against it. The result of the division was waited with breathless anxiety. It was what had been expected. The ministry had been defeated by a small majority; 287 voted against the second reading, 284 voted for it. By a majority of three the great Liberal administration was practically overthrown. The great minister had failed. Like the hero of Schiller's ballad, the brave swimmer had plunged once too often into the flood to bring out a prize, and he perished.

The ministry did not indeed come to an end just then. Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues resigned office, and the Queen sent for Mr.

Disraeli. But Mr. Disraeli prudently declined to accept office with the existing House of Commons. He had been carefully studying the evidences of Conservative reaction, and he felt sure that the time for his party was coming. He had had bitter experience of the humiliation of a minister who tries to govern without a majority in the House of Commons. He afterwards drew an amusing picture of his experiences in that way. He declined to accept office with the existing Parliament. Why not then, it was asked, dissolve Parliament? To that Mr. Disraeli answered, not unreasonably, that it was easy for statesmen in office to dissolve Parliament, but that it would be a very different thing for a man to have to form an administration and then immediately dissolve. He could of course form a government, he said, and dissolve in May; but then he had nothing in particular to dissolve about. The functions of an Opposition were critical; he could not pretend to have a regular policy cut and dry on which the country might be asked to pronounce an opinion at a general election. The Irish University Bill was hardly a question on which to go to the country, and besides it was not a question on which Mr. Disraeli could be expected to appeal to the constituencies, seeing that the House of Commons had decided it in a way of which he approved. The situation was curious. There were two great statesmen disputing, not for office, but how to get out of the responsibility of office. The result was that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues had to return to their places and go on as best they could. There was nothing else to be done. Mr. Disraeli would not accept responsibility just then, and with regard to the interests of his party he was acting like a prudent man.

Mr. Gladstone returned to office. He returned reluctantly; he was weary of the work; he was disappointed; he had suffered in health from the incessant administrative labour to which he had always subjected himself with an unsparing and almost improvident magnanimity. He must have known that, coming back to office under such conditions, he would find his power shaken, his influence much discredited. He bent to the necessities of the time, and consented to be Prime Minister still. He helped Mr. Fawcett to carry a bill for the abolition of tests in Dublin University, as he could do no more just then for university education in Ireland.

The end was near. During the autumn some elections happening incidentally turned out against the Liberal party. The Conservatives were beginning to be openly triumphant in most places. Mr. Gladstone made some modifications in his ministry. Mr. Lowe gave up the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, in which he had been singularly unsuccessful; Mr. Bruce left the Home Office, in which he had not been much of a

success. Mr. Gladstone took upon himself the offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer together, following an example set in former days by Peel and other statesmen. Mr. Lowe became Home Secretary. Mr. Bruce was raised to the Peerage as Lord Aberdare, and was made President of the Council in the room of the Marquis of Ripon, who had resigned. Mr. Childers resigned the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Mr. Bright, whose health had now been restored, came back to the Cabinet in charge of the merely nominal business of the Duchy. There could be no doubt that there were dissensions in the Ministry. Mr. Baxter had resigned the office of Secretary of the Treasury on the ground that he could not get on with Mr. Lowe, who had not consulted him with regard to certain contracts, and had refused to take his advice. The general impression was that Mr. Childers gave up the Chancellorship of the Duchy because he considered that he had claims on the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, which Mr. Gladstone now had taken to himself. These various changes and the rumours to which they gave birth were not calculated to strengthen the public confidence. In truth, the Liberal *régime* was falling to pieces. Lord Salisbury, speaking at a Conservative banquet, expressed his conviction that the Conservatives would at least be able 'to draw the teeth and clip the claws of the Liberal Administration,' and exulted over the security obtained against revolutionary innovation by the fact that the country was likely to be governed for some time by a toothless Liberal Ministry.

Ne quisquam Ajacem possit superare, nisi Ajax. It was Mr. Gladstone himself who dealt the stroke which brought the Liberal Administration to an end. In the closing days of 1873 the Conservatives won a seat at Exeter; in the first few days of 1874 they won a seat at Stroud. Parliament had actually been summoned for February 5. On the night of January 23, an astonishing rumour began to fly through various limited circles of London politicians. Men were mysteriously beckoned away from dinner-tables, and drawing-rooms, and club-rooms. Agitated messengers hurried to ministerial doors seeking for information. There was commotion in the newspaper offices; the telegraph was set in constant action. Next morning all the world read the news in the papers. Mr. Gladstone had suddenly made up his mind to dissolve Parliament, and seek for a restoration of the authority of the Liberal Government by an appeal to the people. He vindicated his decision in an address to his constituents which was unfortunately all too long for genuine popular effect. What the country understood by it was, that Mr. Gladstone did not choose to bear the humiliation of seeming to have the authority he had received in 1868 now 'sunk below the point necessary for the due

defence and prosecution of the public interests;' that he proposed to obtain a new lease of authority by a popular verdict; and that if restored to power he would introduce a series of financial measures which would include the total repeal of the income tax. The country was taken utterly by surprise. Many of Mr. Gladstone's own colleagues had not known what was to be done until the announcement was actually made. The feeling all over the three kingdoms was one of almost unanimous disapproval. Mr. Gladstone's sudden resolve was openly condemned as petulant and unstatesmanlike; it was privately grumbled at on various personal grounds. To us it seems to have been impatient, imprudent, irregular, but certainly spirited and magnanimous. Impolitic it no doubt was; but it ought not to have been unpopular. It must have caused great, and at that time, superfluous inconvenience to Liberal politicians everywhere; and we cannot wonder if they complained. But to the country in general there ought to have been something fascinating in the very quixotry of a resolve which proclaimed that the Minister disdained to remain in office one hour after he had found reason to believe that he no longer possessed the confidence of the people. It was an error indeed, but it was at least a generous error; the mistake of a sensitive and a chivalrous nature.

Mr. Gladstone had surprised the constituencies. We do not know whether the constituencies surprised Mr. Gladstone. They certainly surprised most persons, including themselves. The result of the elections was to upset completely the balance of power. In a few days the Liberal majority was gone. Mr. Gladstone fought a gallant fight himself, and addressed vast open air meetings at Blackheath with the energy of another O'Connell. But it was a hopeless fight against reaction, When the result of the polls came to be made up it was found that the Conservatives had a majority of about fifty, even on the calculation, far too favourable to the other side, which counted every Home Ruler as a Liberal. Mr. Gladstone followed the example set by Mr. Disraeli six years before, and at once resigned office. The great reforming Liberal Administration was gone. The organizing energy which had accomplished such marvels during three or four resplendent years had spent itself and was out of breath. Many causes indeed concurred to bring about the fall of the Liberal Administration. It had committed grave faults itself; some of its members had done it serious harm. Various powerful interests were arrayed against it. But when all allowance has been made for such considerations, it will probably be seen that the most potent influence which bore down the Gladstone Government was the fact, that people in general had grown tired of doing great things, and had got into the mood of the

lady described in one of Mr. Charles Reade's novels, who frankly declares that heroes are her abomination. The English constituencies had grown weary of the heroic, and would have a change.

Had the Liberal Ministers consented to remain in power a few days, a very few, longer, they would have been able to announce the satisfactory conclusion of a very unsatisfactory war. This was one of the least of all our little wars; a war from which it was simply impossible to extract anything in the way of glory, and in which the only honour could be just that which the skill of the English commander was able to secure; the honour of success won in the promptest manner and with the least possible expenditure of life. The Ashantee war arose out of a sort of misunderstanding. The Ashantees are a very fierce and warlike tribe on the Gold Coast of Africa. They were at war with England in 1824, and in one instance they won an extraordinary victory over a British force of about 1,000 men, and carried home with them as a trophy the skull of the British Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles M'Carthy. The Ashantees were afterwards defeated, and a treaty of peace was concluded with them by the Governor of our Gold Coast Settlements, Mr. MacLean, the husband of Miss Landon, better known to literature by her initials 'L. E. L.,' a woman whose poetical gifts, not in themselves very great, combined with her unhappy story to made her at one time a celebrity in England. In 1863, as has been already told in these pages, a war was begun against the Ashantees prematurely and rashly by the Governor of the Gold Coast Settlements, and it had to be abandoned owing to the ravages done by sickness among our men. In 1872 some Dutch possessions on the Gold Coast were transferred by purchase and arrangement of other kinds to England; and this transaction ended, like most of the same nature, by entangling us in misunderstanding, quarrel, and war. The King of Ashantee claimed a tribute formerly allowed to him by the Dutch, and refused to evacuate the territory ceded to England He attacked the Fantees, a tribe of very worthless allies of ours, and a straggling harassing war began between him and our garrisons. The great danger was that if the Ashantees obtained any considerable success, or seeming success even for a moment, all the surrounding tribes would make common cause with them. The Government therefore determined to take up the matter seriously, and send a sufficient force under an experienced and well-qualified commander with instructions to take advantage of the cool season and penetrate to the Ashantee capital, Coomassie, and there inflict a blow which would prove that the Ashantee King could not harass the English settlers with impunity. When the choice of a commander came to be discussed, only one name, as it would seem, arose to the lips of all men.

That was the name of Sir Garnet Wolseley, who had commanded the successful expedition to the Red River region in 1870. Sir Garnet Wolseley had the rare good fortune to sustain the reputation conferred upon him in advance by popular acclaim. He had a very hard task to perform. Of course he could have no difficulty in fighting the Ashantees. The weapons and the discipline of the English army put all thought of serious battle out of the question. But the King of Ashantee had a force fighting on his side far more formidable than the General January and General February on whom the Emperor Nicholas of Russia vainly relied. Wordsworth in his noble ode to Toussaint L'Ouverture tells the fallen chief to be of good heart, for he has on his side 'Powers that will work for him,' 'great allies;' and these are, he says, 'earth, air, and skies;' 'not a breathing of the common wind,' he declares, 'that will forget,' to support his cause. In a literal and terrible sense the King of Ashantee had just such allies. Earth, air, and skies—the earth, the air, the skies of the Gold Coast region would at the right time work for him; not a breathing of the common wind that would forget to breathe pestilence into the ranks of his enemies. The whole campaign must be over and done within the limited range of the cooler months, or there would come into the field to do battle for the African King allies against whom an Alexander or a Cæsar would be powerless. Sir Garnet Wolseley and those who fought under him, sailors, marines, and soldiers, did their work well. They defeated the Ashantees wherever they could get at them; but that was a matter of course. They forced their way to Coomassie, compelled the King to come to terms, one of the conditions being the prohibition of human sacrifices, and they were able to leave the country within the appointed time. The success of the campaign was a question of days and almost of hours; and the victory was snatched out of the very jaws of approaching sun and fever. Sir Garnet Wolseley sailed from England on September 12, 1873, and returned to Portsmouth, having accomplished all his objects, on March 21, 1874. The war was not one to be proud of; it might easily have been avoided; it is not certain that England was entirely in the right of the quarrel first or last; but nothing could be more satisfactory than the ease, success, and completeness with which the campaign had been pushed through to its end.

The Gladstone Government had also had to deal with one of the periodical famines breaking out in Bengal, and if they had remained in office might have been able within a very short time to report that their efforts had been successful. Mr. Gladstone's sudden action, however, deprived them of any such opportunity. They bequeathed to their successors the announcement of a war triumphantly concluded, and a famine

checked; and they bequeathed to them also a very handsome financial surplus. So sudden a fall from power had not up to that time been known in the modern political history of the country. To find its parallel we shall have to come down six years later still. The great Liberal Administration had fallen as suddenly as the French Empire; had disappeared like Aladdin's palace, which was erect and ablaze with light and splendour last night and is not to be seen this morning.

CHAPTER LXIII.

'CONSERVATIVE REACTION.' INSTALLED IN OFFICE.

Mr. Disraeli was not long in forming a Ministry. He reduced the number of the Cabinet in the first instance to twelve. Lord Cairns became Lord Chancellor. Lord Derby was made Foreign Secretary, an appointment which gratified sober-minded men. Lord Salisbury was entrusted with the charge of the Indian Department. This too was an appointment which gave satisfaction outside the range of the Conservative party as well as within it. During his former administration of the India Office, Lord Salisbury had shown great ability and self-command, and he had acquired a reputation for firmness of character and large and liberal views. He was now and for some time after looked upon as the most rising man and the most high-minded politician on the Conservative side. The country was pleased to see that Mr. Disraeli made no account of the differences that formerly existed between Lord Salisbury and himself; of the dislike that Lord Salisbury had evidently felt towards him at one time, and of the manner in which he had broken away from the Conservative Ministry at the time of the Reform Bill of 1867. Lord Carnarvon became Colonial Secretary. Mr. Cross, a Lancashire lawyer, who had never been in office of any kind before, was lifted into the position of Home Secretary. Mr. Gathorne Hardy was made Secretary for War, and Mr. Ward Hunt First Lord of the Admiralty. Sir Stafford Northcote, who had been trained to finance by Mr. Gladstone, accepted the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Duke of Richmond as Lord President of the Council made a safe, inoffensive, and respectable leader of the Government in the House of Lords.

The Liberals seemed to have received a stunning blow. The whole party reeled under it, and did not appear capable for the moment of rallying against the shock. Nothing could be more disheartening than the appearance of the front Opposition benches during a great part of the

session. To accumulate the difficulties, Mr. Gladstone suddenly announced his intention of retiring from the position of leader of the Liberal party. In a letter to Lord Granville, dated March 12, 1874, he explained that 'for a variety of reasons personal to myself,' he 'could not contemplate any unlimited extension of active political service,' and that it might be necessary 'to divest myself of all the responsibilities of leadership at no distant time.' For the present he held the rank of leader only in a sort of conditional way, and he had frankly announced to Lord Granville that he could not give 'more than an occasional attendance in the House of Commons' during that session. This seemed the one step needed to complete the disorganisation of the party. There were many complaints, not loud but deep, of the course taken by Mr. Gladstone. It was contrasted openly as well as secretly with the perseverance, the unwearying patience, which Mr. Disraeli had shown in keeping his place at the head of his party during long years of what must often have seemed hopeless struggle. Mr. Gladstone pleaded his advancing years; but it was asked, are not the years of Mr. Disraeli still further advanced? Who brought us, some discontented Liberals asked, into all this difficulty? Who but the man who now deserts us in the face of the enemy?

The Opposition were for a while apparently not only without a leader but even without a policy or a motive for existence. For a while it seemed as if, to adopt the correct and concise description given by Mr. Clayden in his 'England under Lord Beaconsfield,' 'the Opposition had nothing to oppose.' The Ministry had succeeded to a handsome surplus of nearly six millions. It would be hardly possible under such circumstances to bring in a budget which should be wholly unsatisfactory. Mr. Ward Hunt contrived indeed to get up a momentary scare about the condition of the navy. When introducing the Navy Estimates he talked in tones of ominous warning about his determination not to have a fleet on paper, or to put up with phantom ships. The words sent a wild thrill of alarm through the country. The sudden impression prevailed that Mr. Hunt had made a fearful discovery—had found out that the country had really no navy; that he would be compelled to set about constructing one out of hand. The whole of the surplus at least, people said, would have to be given up to make a beginning; nor did men forget to point to the cheerful possibility of some foreign enemy taking advantage of the opportunity to assail England's unprotected coasts. Mr. Ward Hunt, however, when pressed for an explanation, explained that he really meant nothing. It appeared that he had only been expressing his disapproval on abstract grounds of the maintenance of inefficient navies, and never meant to convey the idea that England's navy was not efficient.

The country breathed again; the surplus seemed safe, and the coasts. The idea of Germany or Russia coming down upon defenceless England, like Achilles on the unarmed Hector in 'Troilus and Cressida,' passed away.

Two new measures belonging to the same order disturbed for a while what Sir Wilfrid Lawson jocularly called 'the almost holy calm, which prevailed in Parliament now that the Conservatives had it all their own way, and the Liberals were crushed. One was the Bill for the abolition of Church Patronage in Scotland; the other, the Public Worship Bill for England. The Church Patronage Bill, which was introduced by the Government, is well described by Mr. Clayden as 'a Liberal measure which had become a reactionary scheme by being brought into the world a generation behind its time.' It took away the appointment of ministers in the Church of Scotland from lay patrons, but only to give it to the male communicants of the parish kirk, not to the whole body of the parishioners. The patronage system was the cause of that great secession from the Church of Scotland under Dr. Chalmers which has been described in an early chapter of this history. Such a measure as that now introduced by the Government, or at least, a measure having such a general purpose, would have prevented the secession in 1843; but it was useless for any purpose of reconciliation in 1874. Moreover, the measure of 1874, by confining the power of appointment to the actual communicants of each Church, took away the national character of the Church of Scotland, and converted it into a sectarian organisation. In a historical sense, the passing of the measure can have little importance unless as it may have given an impulse to the question of disestablishment in Scotland. Its introduction became of some present interest to the House of Commons because it drew Mr. Gladstone into debate for the first time since the opening nights of the session. He opposed the Bill, but of course in vain. Mr. Disraeli complimented him on his reappearance, and kindly expressed a hope that he would favour the House with his presence as often as possible; indeed was quite friendly and patronising to his fallen rival.

The Bill for the Regulation of Public Worship was not a Government measure. It was introduced into the House of Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and into the House of Commons by Mr. Russell Gurney. It was strongly disliked and publicly condemned by some members of the Cabinet; but after it had gone its way fairly towards success Mr. Disraeli showed a disposition to adopt it, and even to speak as if he had had the responsibility of it from the first. Once or twice it would almost seem as if he had forgotten that it was not a measure of his own proposing. The bill illustrated a curious difficulty into which the Church of England had

been brought, in consequence partly of its connection with the State. We have already traced in these volumes the history of the Oxford movement which was intended to quicken the State Church with new life and freshness, and which before long sent some of the greatest divines of that Church into the ranks of the Church of Rome. The influence of the movement made itself felt in other ways as well. It set thought stirring everywhere within the Church. It appealed to much that was philosophical, much that was artistic and æsthetic, and at the same time to much that was sceptical. One body of Churchmen were anxious to maintain the unity of the Christian Church, and would not admit that the Church of England began to exist with the Reformation. They claimed apostolical succession for their bishops; they declared that the clergymen of the Church of England were priests in the true spiritual sense. Thus the Tractarians, as they were called for a time, were thrown into direct antagonism with the Evangelicals. The latter maintained that the Bible was the sole authority; the former held that the New Testament derived its authority from the Church. The Tractarians therefore claimed a right to examine very freely into the meaning of doubtful passages in the Scriptures, and insisted that if the authority of the Church were recognised as that of the Heaven-appointed interpreter, all difficulty about the reconciliation of the scriptural writings with the discoveries of modern science would necessarily disappear. The Tractarian party—we call them by that name now merely as a means of distinguishing them from their opponents, and not with the intention of suggesting that it properly describes them or applies at all to some of them—became divided into two sections. One section inclined towards what may almost be called free thought; the other, to the sentiments and the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church. The State was frequently called upon to interfere. Here the world saw the prosecution of some clergyman for having published an essay supposed to teach infidel doctrine; there the Ecclesiastical courts were engaged in trying to find out whether the Church law had been broken by Ritualistic practices in some Protestant temple. The taste for beauty in decoration which was growing up in English society everywhere had already made its influence felt in the English Church. Clergymen and congregations loved to have their churches adorned like those of the Catholics; they delighted in the sweet and noble music, the incense, the painted windows, the devotional effigies and symbols, the impressive and gorgeous ritual. The astonished Evangelists saw with dismay that the Church as they knew it seemed likely to be torn asunder. On the one side was the philosophical clergyman writing his essay to show that a literal interpretation of certain parts of the Bible was absurd; on the other,

there was the High Church priest setting up his altar, swinging his censer, making his genuflexions, and even establishing his confessional. The Evangelicals had their strongest supporters among the middle and lower-middle classes; the others found favour at once among the rich who went in for culture, and among the very poor.

The law, which was often invoked, proved impotent to deal with the difficulty. It could not punish the clergymen who contributed to the volume called 'Essays and Reviews.' It could not prevent the author of the first essay in that volume from being made a bishop. It could not remove Dr. Colenso from his Colonial bishopric. One clergyman was, in 1871, 'deprived for heresy.' He forthwith started a religion of his own, or at least found a place of worship after his own way of thinking and worshippers to fill it. But it would seem as if he might as well have been allowed to remain in the ranks of the clergy of the Church as many others whom the law failed to reach, or might as well have refused to go out as others had done. It was found impossible to put down Ritualism by law. In some places the Ritualistic practices led to grave scandal and serious riots. It happened occasionally that although the clergyman and the congregation liked the elaborate and ornate worship, their neighbours all around disapproved of it. In some instances the neighbours got into the way of crowding into the church and endeavouring to put down Ritualism by noise and even by violence. All this was becoming scandalous to the eyes of sober people. Many who were otherwise little disposed to approve of the dictatorship of the State in matters of religion, and who did not see how any decision of a court could prove a religious dogma to be right or wrong, were nevertheless inclined to demand that so long as the Church of England was a State institution the authority of the State should be upheld. They took very clear and simple ground. They said: 'The State upholds the English Church on certain conditions and to preach certain doctrines. No man is compelled to preach the doctrines if he does not feel equal in conscience to the task; but if he cannot teach them he can go out of the State Church. We do not take it on us to condemn his opinions; we do not want the law to punish him for holding them. But we say the State employs him to teach one thing and he is teaching another. We employ a man to teach German, and we find he is teaching French. We do not say that he is a wicked person because he teaches French; we only say that we want to have German taught, and that if he cannot do so he must give his place to some one who can.' On the other hand, the Ritualists said: 'You tell us that we are bound by the State-made law. We say we are only bound by the doctrines of the Church. But if we are to be bound by the law, show us first that we have broken

the law. Appeal to your courts of law; do your best. We say the decision has not yet gone against us.' It was not easy to answer this practical argument. The law was not by any means so clear as some of the opponents of Ritualism would have wished it. Moreover, even in cases where a distinct condemnation was obtained from a court of law there was often no way of putting it into execution. A Ritualistic clergyman was ordered to be suspended from his ministrations. He went on with his duties at his church just the same as ever. His congregation supported him, and the practices for which he had been condemned were carried on every Sunday without the slightest modification or interruption. In more than one case a clergyman was actually deposed by authority, and his successor appointed. The congregation held fast by the delinquent and would not admit the new man. The offender remained at his post just as if nothing had happened. It was clear that if all this went on much longer the Establishment must come to an end. One party would renounce State control in order to get freedom; another would repudiate State control because it proved unable to maintain authority. The state of things might be likened to that which prevailed in America for some years before the civil war. There were two irreconcilable parties; if one did not soon secede the other must.

To remedy all this disorder, the Archbishop of Canterbury brought in his Bill for the better regulation of public worship. The object of the Bill was to give offended parishioners a ready way of invoking the authority of the bishop and to enable the bishop to prohibit by his own mandate any practices which he considered improper, or else to submit the question to the decision of a judge specially appointed to decide in such cases. The discussions were chiefly remarkable for the divisions of opinion they showed on both sides of the House. Lord Salisbury opposed the bill in the House of Lords; Mr. Hardy condemned it in the House of Commons. It was condemned as too weak; it was denounced as too strong. Mr. Gladstone came forward with all the energy of his best days to oppose it, on the ground that it threatened to deprive the Church of all her spiritual freedom merely to get a more easy way of dealing with the practices of a few eccentric men. Sir William Harcourt, who had been Solicitor-General under Mr. Gladstone, rushed to the defence of the bill, attacked Mr. Gladstone vehemently, called upon Mr. Disraeli to prove himself the leader of the English people, and in impassioned sentences reminded him that he had put his hand to the plough and must not draw it back. Mr. Gladstone dealt with his late subordinate in a few sentences of good-humoured contempt, in which he expressed his special surprise at the sudden and portentous display of erudition which Sir William Harcourt had poured

out upon the House. Sir William Harcourt was even then a distinctly rising man. He was an effective and somewhat overbearing speaker, with a special aptitude for the kind of elementary argument and the knock-down personalities which the House of Commons can never fail to understand. The House liked to listen to him. He had a loud voice, and never gave his hearers the trouble of having to strain their ears or their attention to follow him. His arguments were never subtle enough to puzzle the simplest country gentleman for one moment. His quotations had no distracting novelty about them, but fell on the ear with a familiar and friendly sound. His jokes were unmistakable in their meaning; his whole style was good strong black and white. He could get up a case admirably. He astonished the House, and must probably even have astonished himself by the vast amount of ecclesiastical knowledge which with only the preparation of a day or two he was able to bring to bear upon the most abstruse or perplexed questions of Church government. He had the advantage of being sure of everything. He poured out his eloquence and his learning on the most difficult ecclesiastical questions with the resolute assurance of one who had given a life to the study. Perhaps we ought rather to say that he showed the resolute assurance which only belongs to one who has not given much of his life to the study of the subject. Probably when Sir William Harcourt had forgotten all that he had read up a little time before concerning Church history, and turned back to his remarkable speeches on the Public Worship Bill, he was as much amazed as Arthur Pendennis looking over one of his old reviews and wondering where on earth he contrived to get the erudition of which he had made such a display.

Mr. Disraeli responded so far to Sir William Harcourt's stirring appeal as to make himself the patron of the bill, and the leader of the movement in its favour. Mr. Disraeli saw that by far the greater body of English public opinion out of doors was against the Ritualists, and that for the moment public opinion accepted the whole controversy as a dispute for or against Ritualism. The course taken by the Prime Minister further enlivened the debates by bringing about a keen little passage of arms between him and Lord Salisbury, whom Mr. Disraeli described as a great master of jibes and flouts and jeers. All this was as good as a play to the unconcerned public. Nothing could be more lively and entertaining. People in general soon forgot all about the bill itself, and even about the Ritualists, in the interest which was awakened by the splitting up of political parties, the attacks of friend on friend, and the cheerful sallies of Cabinet Minister against Cabinet Minister. Mr. Gladstone brought forward a series of resolutions in the form of amendments defining his objections to

the measure, but he forebore to press them to a division. The bill was passed in both Houses of Parliament and obtained the Royal assent almost at the end of the session. Nothing in particular has come of it thus far, except law suits which it seems impossible to bring to any practical conclusion. The new judge and the strengthening authority have tried their hands more than once against refractory clergymen, and with no better effect than to prove that the refractory clergyman may still bid defiance to his superiors and the law. Ritualism was not put down. Doubtless it appealed to certain instincts in many hearts which the colder and less ornate ceremonial of the ordinary Church of England service failed to satisfy. The interference of the law seemed to have the effect common in such cases. It made the followers of some Ritualistic clergymen regard their leader not merely as an apostle but as a martyr. In some instances it exalted commonplace men into the worshipped of congregations and the idol of emotional women. In some instances it put good and pious men at the mercy of fussy and ignorant alarmists. On the whole it promoted rather than suppressed Ritualism.

One useful piece of legislation, or perhaps we ought rather to say the first step in a new course of useful legislation, was forced upon the Government by Mr. Plimsoll. This was a measure for the protection of seamen against the danger of being sent to sea in vessels unfit for the voyage. Mr. Plimsoll was a man who had pushed his way through life by ability and hard work into independence and wealth. He was full of human sympathy, and was especially interested in the welfare of the poor. His impassioned temperament made him apt to be eaten up by the zeal of his cause; he had many of the enthusiast's characteristic defects, but he was filled with the best qualities of a genuine enthusiasm. Mr. Plimsoll's attention happened to be turned to the condition of our merchant seamen, and he found that the state of the law left them almost absolutely at the mercy of the shipowner. The system which prevailed with regard to maritime insurances put a great temptation in the way of unscrupulous and selfish shipowners. It was easy to insure a vessel, and once insured it mattered little to such a shipowner how soon she went to the bottom. The law dealt in very arbitrary fashion with the seaman who for any reason refused to fulfil his contract and go to sea. It gave to magistrates the power of sending him at once to the common prison. The poor seaman often made his contract with utter thoughtlessness, and when once he made it he was bound to it. The criminal law bore upon him; only the civil law applied to the employer. Mr. Plimsoll was convinced that a great many lives were lost by the unprincipled conduct of certain shipowners who sent men out in rotten but well insured vessels, and left them

to their fate. He actually found cases of seamen sentenced to prison because they refused to sail in crazy ships, which, when they put to sea, never touched a port but went down in mid ocean. Letters were found in the pockets of drowned seamen which showed that they had made their friends aware of their forebodings as to the condition of the vessel that was to be their coffin. All this stirred Mr. Plimsoll's blood to such a degree that he could not endure it. He began a regular crusade against certain shipowners. He published a book called, 'Our Seamen, an Appeal,' in which he made the most startling and it must be added the most sweeping charges. Courts of law were invoked to deal with his assertions; the authority of Parliament was called on to protect shipowning members against the violence of the irrepressible philanthropist. The public had not much difficulty in understanding Mr. Plimsoll. They saw at once that he was a man likely enough to be betrayed into exaggeration, sometimes into very serious mistake: but that his purpose was genuine, that his cause was good, and that on the whole the case he made out was one calling for the instant attention of Parliament. He was clearly wrong in some of his charges against individuals, but a very general opinion prevailed that he was only too just in his condemnation of the system. Mr. Plimsoll brought in a Bill for the better protection of the lives of seamen. It was a stringent measure. It proposed a compulsory survey of all ships before leaving port, various precautions against overloading, the restriction of deck-loading, and the compulsory painting of a load line, the position of which was to be determined by legislation. This measure was strongly opposed by the shipowners in the House, and by many others as well as they, who regarded it as too stringent, and who also feared, that by putting too much responsibility on the Government it would take all responsibility off the shipowners. The Bill came to the test of a division on June 24, 1874, and was rejected by a majority of only three, 170 voting for it, and 173 against. The Government then recognising the importance of the subject, and the strong feeling which prevailed in the country with regard to it, undertook to bring in a Merchant Shipping Bill of their own. They introduced the Bill in the session of 1875. It did not go nearly so far as Mr. Plimsoll would have desired, but it did promise to be at least part of a series of legislation which, further developed, might have accomplished the object. Such as it was, however, the Government did not press it, and towards the end of July Mr. Disraeli announced that they would not go further that year with the measure.

The 22nd of July saw one of the most extraordinary scenes that ever took place in the House of Commons. Mr. Plimsoll, under the influence

of disappointment and of anger, seemed to have lost all self-control. He denounced some of the shipowners of that House; he threatened to name and expose them; he called them villains who had sent brave men to death. When interrupted by the Speaker, and told that he must not apply the term villains to members of the House, he repeated again and again, and in the most vociferous tones, that they were villains, and that he would abide by his words. He refused to recognise the authority of the Speaker. He shouted, shook his fist at the leading members of the Government, and rushed out of the House in a state of excitement that seemed little less than that of an actual maniac. Thereupon Mr. Disraeli moved, 'that the Speaker do reprimand Mr. Plimsoll for his disorderly behaviour.' Mr. A. M. Sullivan, one of the Home Rule members, returned for the first time at the general election, a man of remarkable eloquence and of high character, rushed into the House pallid and almost breathless with excitement, and endeavoured to interpose on behalf of Mr. Plimsoll. He pleaded that Mr. Plimsoll was seriously ill and hardly able to account for his actions owing to mental excitement arising from an overwrought system, and from the intensity of his zeal in the cause of the merchant seamen. He asked that a week should be given Mr. Plimsoll to consider his position. Mr. Fawcett and other members made a similar appeal, and the Government consented to postpone a decision of the question for a week. Mr. Plimsoll had offended against the rules, the traditions, and the dignity of the House, and many even of those who sympathised with his general purpose thought he had damaged his cause and ruined his individual position. Nothing, however, could be more extraordinary and unexpected than the result. It was one of those occasions in which the public out of doors showed that they could get to the real heart of a question more quickly and more clearly than Parliament itself. Out of doors it was thoroughly understood that Mr. Plimsoll's behaviour in the House of Commons was a gross offence against order. It was thoroughly understood that he was too sweeping in his charges; that he was entirely mistaken in some of them; that he had denounced men who did not deserve denunciation; that he had surrounded a good cause with an unfortunate adornment of exaggeration, extravagance, and ill-temper. All this the public understood and admitted. But the difference between the public and the House of Commons was, that while understanding and admitting all this, the public clearly saw that as to the main question at issue Mr. Plimsoll was entirely in the right. They saw that, making allowance for all exaggeration and all ebullitions of temper, Mr. Plimsoll was the first man to take a just view of the hardships inflicted on merchant seamen; and that the heart of his case, if we may use that expression, was sound. The country was therefore determined to stand by him.

Great meetings were held all over England during the next few days, at every one of which those who were present pledged themselves to assist Mr. Plimsoll in his general object and policy. The result was that when Mr. Plimsoll appeared in the House of Commons the week after, and in a very full and handsome manner made apology for his offences against Parliamentary order, it was apparent to everyone in the House and out of it that he was master of the situation, and that the Government would have to advance with more or less rapid strides along the path where he was leading. Finally, the Government brought in, and forcibly pushed through, a Merchant Shipping Bill, which met for the moment some of the difficulties of the case, and which they promised to supplement afterwards by a complete scheme of legislation. Mr. Disraeli indeed went so far as quietly to claim for himself and for the Government some of the merit of having caused the extraordinary scene in the House of Commons. He suggested that the Government were perfectly aware that nothing could be done until the temper of the country was thoroughly roused, and therefore implied, if he did not actually affirm, that it was partly by their design that Mr. Plimsoll was stirred to his extraordinary demonstration, and the assistance of the public thereby obtained for the passing of a strong measure. 'Even if one does call them names,' said Mrs. Gamp, vindicating her treatment of her patients, 'it's only done to rouse them.'

The measure did not prove to be a very strong one, but it did something towards Mr. Plimsoll's object. The Government afterwards promised to supplement it by legislation, regulating in some way the system of maritime insurances, which they justly declared to be essential to any satisfactory and final settlement of the question. It is clear that so long as the existing system of maritime insurance was allowed to prevail, the temptation to unscrupulous shipowners would continue to be almost irresistible, and that no legislation merely applying to the fabric of the ship could properly secure the lives of the seamen. Other things, however, interfered with the carrying out of the Government proposals, such as they were. The regulation of maritime insurance was forgotten. Mr. Disraeli's colleagues soon had too many questions of imperial interest on their hands in all parts of the world to have time or inclination for business of so homely a nature as a measure for the protection of the lives of English merchant seamen. Nothing further was done during the reign of the Conservative Ministry to complete the scheme which they had promised in the beginning, and many sessions after the House saw another outburst of passion on the part of Mr. Plimsoll, another attempt of the Government to put him to censure, and another distinct declaration on the part of the

country, that however Mr. Plimsoll might have offended against the rules of the House, his spirit and purpose were thoroughly in unison with the feelings of the public.

The Government seemed for a while, however, inclined to keep plodding steadily on with quiet schemes of domestic legislation. These were not usually very comprehensive or drastic schemes. They were rather of the kind which ill-natured critics would describe as tinkering. The Government tinkered at a measure for the security of improvements made by agricultural tenants. They made it purely permissive, and therefore thoroughly worthless. This one defect tainted many of their schemes of domestic reform; this inclination to make every reform permissive. It seemed to be thought a clever stroke of management to introduce a measure professedly for the removal of some inequality or other grievance, and then to make it permissive and allow all parties concerned to contract themselves out of it. Thus it was said in effect to the agricultural tenant: 'Behold, here is a Bill to enable you to hold fast the fruits of your expenditure and your labour;' and to the landlord: 'You have no cause to be alarmed; for you see this is only a permissive bill, and you can contract yourself out of it if your tenants agree, and of course they must agree.' Mr. Cross, the Home Secretary, however, proved a very efficient Minister, and introduced many useful schemes of legislation, among the rest an Artizans' Dwelling Bill, the object of which was to enable local authorities to pull down houses unfit for human habitation and rebuild on the sites. The Government made experiments in reaction here and there. They restored the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, which had seemed actually doomed. They got into some trouble by issuing a circular to captains of war vessels on the subject of the reception of slaves on board their ships. The principle which the circular laid down was in substance a full recognition of the rights of a slave-owner over a fugitive slave. The country rose in indignation against this monstrous reversal of England's time-honoured policy; and the circular was withdrawn and a new one issued. This too proved unsatisfactory. The Government made excuse by pleading that something of the same kind had been done before under a Liberal Administration, and attempted to satisfy public feeling by declaring that a slave was not to be handed back if the slave's life would be endangered by the withdrawal of the shelter of the English flag. Thereupon it was at once asked, Is a woman slave to be handed back to a ravisher? The Government became entangled in a whole network of contradictions and difficulties, and after having tried various expedients, appointed commissions, and made other futile efforts to get out of the trouble, they had at length to allow the old principle to re-assert

itself, and the flag of England, whether it floats on sea or land, to be a protection and a shelter for the slave. Of course it is not intended that English vessels of war shall hold out invitations to fugitive slaves or act as the propagandist agents of the principles of personal freedom. But the broad plain principle long established was, that when a slave does get on board an English vessel, just as when he touches British soil, he is free and is not to be restored to slavery ; and that principle the Government saw themselves at last compelled to re-affirm. It was impossible for them to resist the popular demand ; some of their own men in the House of Commons fell away from them and insisted that the old principle must be kept up, and that the slave-owner shall not take his slave from under the shadow of the English flag.

All this time what was Mr. Gladstone doing? He appeared to have withdrawn from the paths of Parliamentary life and almost from the political world. He was very busy indeed in another way. He had taken to polemical literature. He was writing a series of essays to prove that the doctrine of papal infallibility if strictly acknowledged by Catholics would place their allegiance to whatever Sovereign entirely at the disposal of the Pope. He was stirring up a heated controversy by endeavouring to prove that absolute obedience to the Catholic Church was henceforward inconsistent with the principles of freedom, and that the Papal doctrine was everywhere the enemy of liberty. Cardinal Manning, Dr. Newman, and other great controversialists had taken the field against Mr. Gladstone, and the argument went on for a considerable time without abatement of eagerness. Grave politicians were not a little scandalised at the position taken by a statesman who only the other day was Prime Minister. There seemed something curiously undignified and unseemly in Mr. Gladstone's leading a theological controversy. A speaker at an Evangelical Meeting in Exeter Hall would have been quite in his place when using such arguments as those employed by Mr. Gladstone ; but a sharp polemical controversy provoked by a great statesman was something new in the modern world. One conclusion was adopted everywhere. It seemed clear that Mr. Gladstone never meant to take any leading part in politics again. Surely, it was said, if he had the remotest idea of entering the political field anew, he never would have thus gratuitously assailed the religious belief of the Roman Catholic subjects of the Queen. Nor indeed did it appear as if it would be very suitable for England to have a statesman in office again who must have given offence to all the Catholic Sovereigns and Ministers of Europe. Unfriendly critics hinted that Mr. Gladstone was writing against the Pope and the Vatican in order to wreak his grudge because of the condemnation of his Irish University Bill by the heads

of the Catholic Church in Ireland. It is not probable that any personal motive influenced Mr. Gladstone in a course which all his true admirers of whatever political party must have been sorry to see him follow. He had always a keen relish for theological disputation. He had in him much of the taste and the temper of the ecclesiastic. A religious controversy came to him as the most natural sort of recreation after the fatigue and disappointments of the political arena. Carteret, driven from office, 'retired laughing,' says Macaulay, 'to his books and his bottle.' Fox found relief from political work in his loved Greek authors. Talleyrand played whist. Mr. Gladstone sought relaxation in religious controversy. He was as eager about it as ever he had been about a Budget or a Reform Bill. He assailed the Pope as if he were attacking Mr. Disraeli. He declared against the Vatican as if he were overwhelming the Tory Opposition with his rhetoric. There was an earnestness about him which made some men smile and others feel sad. Most of his friends shook their heads; most of his enemies were delighted. Out of this depth it seemed impossible that he could ever rise. Mr. Disraeli had once said, 'there was a Palmerston.' Did he feel tempted now to say 'there was a Gladstone'?

In the beginning of 1875, Mr. Gladstone had formally retired from the office of leader of the Liberal party in the House of Commons. There was some difficulty at first about the choice of his successor. Two men stood intellectually high above all other possible competitors—Mr. Bright and Mr. Lowe. But it was well known that Mr. Bright's health would not allow him to undertake such laborious duties, and Mr. Lowe was quietly assumed to have none of the leader's qualities. Sir William Harcourt had not weight enough; neither had Mr. Goschen; the time of these two men had apparently not yet come. The real choice was between Mr. Forster and Lord Hartington. Mr. Forster, however, knew that he had estranged the Nonconformists from him by the course he had taken in his education measures, and he withdrew from what he felt to be an untenable position. Lord Hartington was therefore arrived at by a sort of process of exhaustion. It is not too much to say that had he not been the son of a great Whig duke, no human being would ever have thought of him as leader of the Liberal party. But it is only right to add that he proved much better than his promise. He had a robust straightforward nature, and by constant practice he made himself an effective debater. Men liked the courage and the candid admission of his own deficiencies, with which he braced himself up to his most difficult task—to take the place of Gladstone in debate and to confront Disraeli.

CHAPTER LXIV.

THE EASTERN QUESTION AGAIN.

A CHANGE soon came over the spirit of the Administration. It began to be seen more and more clearly that Mr. Disraeli had not come into office merely to consider the claims of agricultural tenants and to pass measures for the pulling down of what Mr. Cross, the Home Secretary, called 'rookeries' in the back slums of great cities. The Prime Minister was well known to cherish loftier ambitions. He was not supposed to have any warm personal interest in prosaic measures of domestic legislation. If a great Reform Bill were brought forward he could fight against it first, and adopt it and enlarge it afterwards. If any question of picturesque theology were under discussion he was the man to sustain religion with epigram, and array himself on the side of the angels in panoply of paradox. But his inclinations were all for the broader and more brilliant fields of foreign politics. The poetic young notary in Richter's story was found with his eyes among the stars and his soul in the blue ether. Mr. Disraeli's eyes were among the stars of imperialist ambition; his soul was in the blue ether of high policy. Since his early years he had not travelled. He had hardly ever left England even for a few days. He knew personally next to nothing of any foreign country. Perhaps for this very reason foreign affairs had all the more magical fascination for him. The prosaic dulness of Downing Street may have sent his fancy straying over the regions of Alexander's conquests; the shortness of the daily walks between the Treasury and the House of Commons may have filled him with dreams of far-extended frontiers and a new Empire of the East.

The marked contrast between the political aptitudes and tastes of Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone came in to influence still further the difference between the policy of the new Government and that of its predecessor. Mr. Gladstone delighted in the actual work and business of administration. As Dr. Johnson could grapple with whole libraries, so Mr. Gladstone could grapple with whole budgets. He could assimilate almost in a moment vast masses of figures which other men would have found bewildering to look at. He could get into his mind almost in a flash all the details of the most intricate piece of legislation. During the long, involved and complicated discussions of the Irish Church Bill and the Irish Land Bill, he had conducted the controversy chiefly himself, and argued the legal details of perplexed clauses with lawyers like Cairns and Ball and Butt.

He could indeed do anything but rest. Now Mr. Disraeli had neither taste nor aptitude for the details of administration. He could not keep his mind to the dry details of a Bill. He could not construct a complicated measure, nor could he even argue it clause by clause when other men had constructed it for him and explained it to him. He enjoyed administration on the large scale; he loved political debate; he liked to make a great speech. But when he was not engaged in his favourite work he preferred to be doing nothing. It was natural therefore that Mr. Gladstone's Administration should be one of practical work; that it should introduce Bills to deal with perplexed and complicated grievances; that it should take care to keep the finances of the country in good condition. Mr. Disraeli had no personal interest in such things. He loved to feed his mind on gorgeous imperial fancies. It pleased him to think that England was, what he would persist in calling her, an Asiatic Power, and that he was administering the affairs of a great Oriental Empire. He was fond of legislation on a vague and liberal scale; legislation which gave opportunity for swelling praise and exalted rhetoric. It was not without justice that his opponents constantly insisted that he was not an Englishman but a foreigner, a descendant of an Oriental race. There was indeed something singularly narrow and ungenerous in the constant taunts thrown out against Mr. Disraeli on the score of his Jewish ancestry. Every one who was at all within the limits of the actual political world knew that these taunts came from Mr. Disraeli's political supporters as well as from his political opponents. Every discontented Conservative was ready to whisper something about his chief's Jewish descent. But although there was an inexcusable want of generosity in thus making Mr. Disraeli's extraction and ancestral faith a source of objection, it must be owned that as a matter of historical fact his foreign extraction has had a very distinct influence on his political tendencies and his ministerial career. Mr. Disraeli had never until now had an opportunity of showing what his own style of statesmanship would be. He had always been in office only, but not in power. Now he had for the first time a strong majority behind him. He could do as he liked. He had the full confidence of the Sovereign. His party were now wholly devoted to him. They could not but know that it was he whose patience and sagacity had kept them together and had organised victory for them. They began to regard him as infallible. A great many on the other side admired him as much as they disliked his policy, and believed in his profound sagacity as devoutly as any of his most humble followers. He had come to occupy in the eyes of Englishmen of all parties something of the position once accorded to Napoleon III. by the public opinion of Europe. Even those who de-

tested still feared; men believed in his power none the less because they had no faith in his policy. That Mr. Disraeli could not be mistaken in anything began to be the right sort of thing to say. He was therefore now in a position to indulge freely in his own personal predilections with regard to the way of governing England. In the House of Commons he had no longer any rival to dread in debate. Mr. Gladstone had withdrawn from the active business of politics; Mr. Bright was not strong enough in physical health to care much for controversy; there was no one else who could by any possibility be regarded as a proper adversary for Mr. Disraeli. The new Prime Minister therefore had everything his own way. He soon showed what sort of statesmanship he liked best. He soon turned away from the dusty and plodding paths of domestic legislation. He ceased even to pretend to have any interest in such commonplace and homely work. He showed that he was resolved to play on a vaster stage, and to seek the applauses of a more cosmopolitan audience. Napoleon invited Talma to Erfurt, that he might play to a pitfull of Kings. Mr. Disraeli was evidently determined to play to an audience of Kings and Emperors.

In politics as in art the weaknesses of the master of a school are most clearly seen in the performances of his imitators and admirers. Mr. Disraeli's admirers began to manifest his tendencies more emphatically then he allowed himself to do. At all public meetings and dinners where Conservative orators declaimed there was much talk about imperial instincts, imperial missions and destinies, and so forth. A distinguished member of Mr. Disraeli's Cabinet proclaimed that since the Conservatives came into office there had been something stirring in the very air which spoke of imperial enterprise. The Elizabethan days were to be restored, it was proudly declared. England was to resume her high place among the nations. She was to make her influence felt all over the world, but more especially on the European continent. The Cabinets and Chancelleries of Europe were to learn that nothing was to be done any more without the authority of England. 'A spirited foreign policy' was to be inaugurated, a new era was to begin. Enthusiastic Conservatives seemed almost literally to swell with pride when they talked of the things to be done under the administration of Mr. Disraeli. The long ignoble reign of peace and non-intervention was at an end. Every man that did not proclaim that British influence was to reign paramount over Europe and Asia was Anti-English, was cosmopolitan, was a member of the Peace Society, was a devotee of Cobden, a defender of the *Alabama* Treaty, a disciple of non-intervention, and generally speaking, a disgrace to his country, and a traitor to his Sovereign.

Thoughtful men who were not in any sense political partisans; men who were not engaged in politics on either side, began to shake their heads at these new political manifestations. There was an ominous self-consciousness about them. Empires are not made, or are not made great, they said, by persons who go about proclaiming an imperial mission. The statesmen who proved themselves truly imperial did not parade in heroic attitudes beforehand and say in pompous tones, 'Behold us!—we have it for our task to be the makers of Empires.' Such utterances were not happy prologues to the swelling act of the imperial theme. The greatness of the age of Elizabeth is not to be revived by talking of an Elizabethan revival. Such attempts seemed insincere and shallow. They resembled some of the æsthetic pretences and follies of the day; the sham mediævalism, the affectation of the affectations of the Queen Anne age. There was too much posturing about the new statecraft to give comfort to plain and thoughtful minds. Goethe has said very well of a certain kind of affectation, that it is a pleasant and harmless thing to dress up as a Turk once in a way when going to a masked ball, but that it is unpardonable waste of time for an honest Western to try to make himself believe all day long that he is a Turk. Now England saw a few middle-aged or ancient gentlemen gravely trying to persuade themselves and their friends that they were Elizabethan conquerors of new worlds, Heaven-ordained makers of new Empires. The ordinary English mind was not imaginative enough for this sort of thing. Sensible and sober men would be certain to get tired of it soon.

Perhaps the first indication of the new foreign policy was given by the purchase of the shares which the Khedive of Egypt held in the Suez Canal. English Governments had in the first instance opposed the scheme for the construction of the Suez Canal, and English scientific men had endeavoured to prove that the scheme could never be carried out. Now however that the Canal was open and was a success, some alarmists began to find a danger to England in the fact that it made the approach to India more easy for other European Powers as well as for her. The Khedive of Egypt held nearly half the 400,000 original shares in the Canal, and the Khedive was going every day faster and faster on the road to ruin. He was on the brink of bankruptcy. He had been living in the true fashion of an Eastern prince, gratifying every expensive whim as it crossed his listless mind; stimulating himself by the invention of new ways of spending money when the old caprices tired him; lavishing on the purchase and the keep of fat women treasures that might have saved millions of his wretched subjects from starvation. His 176,000 shares came into the market; and on November 25, 1875, the world was astonished by the

news that the English Government had turned stock-jobber and bought them for four millions sterling. The idea was not the Government's own. The editor of a London evening paper, Mr. Frederick Greenwood, was the man to whom the thought first occurred. He made it known in the first instance, it is believed, to a member of the Cabinet, who threw cold water on it. Not discouraged, Mr. Greenwood tried the Prime Minister himself; and Mr. Disraeli was caught by the proposition, and the shares were instantly bought up in the name of the English Government. Seldom in our time has any act on the part of a Government been received with such general approbation. The London newspapers broke into a chorus of applause. The London Clubs were delighted. The air rang with praises of the courage and spirit shown by the Ministry. If here and there a faint voice was raised to suggest that the purchase was a foolish proceeding, that it was useless, that it was undignified, a shout of offended patriotism drowned the ignoble remonstrance. Some Continental newspapers did a good deal to stimulate the feeling that prevailed in England by condemning the act as audacious, arrogant, and ominous of an intention to interfere too actively in foreign affairs. This was the very course to stir the feeling of Englishmen. There was a general sense of satisfaction at the idea that England was again regarded as an arrogant and dominating power. Men held up their heads grandly, and went about pride in their port, defiance in their eye, nobly over-conscious of belonging to a nation which could make her influence felt once more in foreign affairs. When Parliament met, the Liberal leaders ventured to make some objection to the purchase and to the mode of completing it; but all wise persons declared that the very attempt only showed how entirely the Liberal leaders were out of sympathy with the English people. It is true that one member of the Cabinet, Lord Derby, endeavoured to make as little as possible of the purchase, and to represent it as a step taken merely to prevent any foreign influence from preponderating in the management of a canal which was chiefly important for English commerce. Mr. Disraeli and some of his colleagues, on the other hand, spoke in a grand and mysterious way which gave people to understand that the buying of the shares was part of some great scheme of policy destined to make England mistress of the East, and to checkmate the designs of a jealous world. Nothing in particular came of the bargain in the end, and the popular enthusiasm soon cooled down. The act, however, is of historical importance as the first of a series of strokes made by the Government in foreign policy, each of which came in the nature of a surprise to Parliament and the country. It is probable that Mr. Disraeli counted upon making his Government popular by affording to the public at intervals

the exciting luxury of a new sensation. The public were undoubtedly rather tired of having been so long quiet and prosperous. They liked to know that their government was doing something. There are fashions in politics as in literature and in dress. 'Sensationalism' was now decidedly the mode in the political world. Mr. Disraeli led the fashion, and stimulated the public taste. The Government tried to establish a South African Confederation, and sent out Mr. Froude, the romantic historian, to act as the representative of their policy. The Prince of Wales was sent on a tour to India, a very reasonable and proper thing in itself, but which the Government endeavoured to surround with all the radiance of a new Avatar. The Prince was taken out to India and introduced to all the Princes and other persons whom officialism thought it convenient for him to meet. He got no nearer to the knowledge of the real feelings of any of the Indian populations than if he had remained at Marlborough House. The Government meanwhile made some changes in the relations of the India Office here to the Viceroy in Calcutta, which gave much greater power into the hands of the Secretary for India. One immediate result of this was the retirement of Lord Northbrook, a prudent and able man, before the term of his administration had actually arrived. Mr. Disraeli gave the country another little surprise. He appointed Lord Lytton Viceroy of India. Lord Lytton had been previously known chiefly as the writer of pretty and sensuous verse, and the author of one or two showy and feeble novels. In literary capacity he was at least as much inferior to his father as his father was to Scott or Goethe. All that was known of him besides was, that he had held several small diplomatic posts without either distinction or discredit. The world was certainly a good deal astonished at the appointment of such a man to the most important office under the Sovereign; an office which had strained the intellectual energies of men like Dalhousie and Canning and Elgin. But people were in general willing to believe that Mr. Disraeli knew Lord Lytton to be possessed of a gift of administration which the world outside had not had any chance of discerning in him. Not much, it was remembered, was known of Lord Mayo's capacity for the task of governing India when he was sent out to Calcutta; and Lord Mayo's administration had undoubtedly been successful. There was no reason why Lord Lytton should not turn out a born administrator. There was no reason why he should not suddenly prove the possession of unexpected gifts, like another Cromwell, Clive, or Spinola. There was something too which gratified many persons in the appointment. It seemed gracious and kindly of Mr. Disraeli thus to recognise and exalt the son of his old friend and companion in arms. There was a feeling all over England which wished well to the appointment and sincerely hoped it might prove a success.

Another little sensation was created by the invention of a new title for the Queen. At the beginning of the Session of 1876 the Royal Speech announced that an addition was to be made to the Sovereign's titles, and after several attempts on the part of the Opposition to get at the nature of the change, Mr. Disraeli at last announced in a somewhat hesitating way that the Queen was to be called 'Empress of India.' A strong dislike was felt to this superfluous and tawdry addition to the ancient style of the sovereigns of England. The title of Emperor had been a good deal tarnished of late. The Emperor of the French had but recently fallen in the dust; there had been an Emperor of Mexico and an Emperor of Hayti. The title of the German Emperor was in one sense only a restoration of a dignity which had been historical; and in any case the restoration was not especially popular in England. But to convert the immemorial crown of the English sovereign into a brand-new glittering imperial diadem seemed to most persons simply an act of vulgarity. The educated feeling of the country rose in revolt against this preposterous innovation. Some of the debates in the House of Commons were full of fire and spirit, and recalled the memory of more stirring times when the Liberal party was in heart and strength. Mr. Lowe spoke against the new title with a vivacity and a bitterness of sarcasm that reminded listeners of his famous opposition to the Reform Bill of 1866. Mr. Joseph Cowen, Member for Newcastle, who had been in the House for some sessions without making any mark, suddenly broke into the debates with a speech which at once won him the name of an orator, and which a leading Member of the Government, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, described as having 'electrified' the House. Mr. Disraeli chaffed the Opposition rather than reasoned with it. He pointed out as one justification of the title, the fact that Spenser had dedicated his 'Faerie Queene' to 'the most high mightie and magnificent Empresse Elizabeth.' Spenser of course only used the word after the fantastic ways of court flattery in his time, and because he thought Empress sounded well. Milton's Satan twice addresses Eve as Empress. Mr. Disraeli also cited in evidence a letter from a young lady at school, who had directed his attention to the fact that in 'Guy's Geography' the Queen was already described as Empress of India. This style of argument did not add much to the dignity of the debate. Mr. Lowe spoke with justifiable anger and contempt of the Prime Minister's introducing 'the lispings of the nursery' into a grave discussion, and asked whether Mr. Disraeli wished to make the House in general think as meanly of the subject as he did himself. The Government, of course, carried their point. They deferred so far to public opinion as to put into the Act a provision against the use of the Imperial title in the United Kingdom. There was indeed a desire that its

use should be prohibited everywhere except in India, and most of the members of the Opposition were at first under the impression that the Government had undertaken to do so much. But the only restriction introduced into the Act had reference to the employment of the additional title in these islands. The unlucky subject was the occasion of a new and a somewhat unseemly dispute afterwards. In a speech which he delivered to a public meeting at East Retford, Mr. Lowe made an unfortunate statement to the effect that the Queen had endeavoured to induce two former Ministers to confer upon her this new title and had not succeeded. It was a very rash act on the part of a responsible public man to make such a statement without positive certainty as to its truth; perhaps it would not have been a very wise or proper proceeding on the part of such a man to make the statement even if it were true. Mr. Lowe proved to be absolutely wrong in his assertion. No attempt of the kind had ever been made by the Queen. Mr. Disraeli found his enemy delivered into his hands. The question was incidentally and indirectly brought up in the House of Commons on May 2, 1876, and Mr. Disraeli seized the opportunity. He denounced Mr. Lowe, thundered at him from across the table, piled up a heap of negative evidence to show that his assertion could not be true, and at the very close of his speech came down on the hapless offender with the crushing announcement that he had the authority of the Queen herself to contradict the statement. Nothing could have been in worst taste than Mr. Disraeli's way of making this very necessary contradiction. It is evident that the right course would have been to put into the fewest and the simplest words the announcement which Her Majesty had very properly authorised the Minister to make. The dignity of the Sovereign required that her name and her word should not be introduced to the House by a somewhat coarse rhetorical artifice at the end of a speech, and that they should not be preluded by impassioned sentences of boisterous and furious denunciation. Mr. Lowe sat like one crushed, while Mr. Disraeli roared at him and banged the table at him. He said nothing that night; but on the following Thursday evening he made an apology which assuredly did not want completeness or humility. The title which was the occasion for so much debate has not come into greater popular favour since that time. It is used in India, and we occasionally see evidences of an inclination to bring it quietly into use elsewhere; but there was a very general concurrence of opinion among educated persons in all parts of the country as to the impropriety of the measure adopted by the Government and the vulgarising effect of the new addition to the Royal title. It was all part of an imperialising policy, some men said, part of a deliberate scheme to make the institutions of the country less liberal and

popular. It is part, other men said, of a tawdry love for finery and frippery in language and policy; it savours of the taste which associated the banner of St. George with the mountains of Rasselas. Mr. Disraeli, however, had a large majority in both Houses of Parliament, and he carried his proposal by about the same preponderance of votes in the Commons as in the Lords. Then the country soon forgot all about the matter. More serious questions were coming up to engage the attention of the public.

When Mr. Disraeli was pressed during the debates on the Royal Title to give some really serious reason for the change, it was observed as significant that he made reference more or less vague to the necessity of asserting the position of the Sovereign of England as supreme ruler over the whole empire of India. The Prime Minister spoke in the tone of one who feels more than he desires to express; of one who gives a warning which he wishes to be understood without need of fuller explanation. Every one knew what Mr. Disraeli meant. He had undoubtedly let drop words which were calculated to produce a deep effect on the public mind. They decided the wavering opinions of many people. There were men who sincerely disliked the idea of the fire-new title of Empress, and who yet felt that after what the Prime Minister had said it would not be prudent to oppose the act of the Government. Mr. Disraeli had purposely touched a chord which was sure to vibrate all over the country. The necessity to which he alluded was the necessity of setting up the flag of England on the citadel of England's Asiatic Empire as a warning to the one enemy whom the English people believed they had reason to dread. Mr. Disraeli had raised what has been called the Russian spectre. No influence during our time has been so potent to direct the foreign, and even the domestic policy, to disturb the relations of parties and to rouse the passions of the people, as that which is exercised by the dread and distrust of Russian ambition. A great crisis was now again at hand.

It has been already mentioned that Lord Aberdeen was of opinion at the close of the Crimean War that that war might secure the peace of Europe for twenty-five years. His opinion was thought then to be hardly doing justice to the efficacy of the measures taken to sustain Turkey and to restrain the ambition of Russia. Lord Aberdeen, however, had overrated instead of underrating the endurance of the peace that was made by the Treaty of Paris. Only twenty-two years had passed when Turkey and Russia were at war again. During all the interval Turkey had been occupied in throwing away every opportunity for her political and social reorganisation. The influence of the statesmanship of Constantinople had been growing more and more baneful to all the populations under the control of the Sultan. There had been insurrections in Crete, in the Herzegovina,

in other parts of the provinces misgoverned by Turkey; and they had been put down, whenever the Porte was strong enough, with a barbarous severity. Men on both sides of English politics were now losing all hope of Turkey's regeneration. Two plain facts were present to the consciousness of Europe. Turkey was sinking day by day; Russia was returning to the position she occupied before the Crimean War. Was Russia also returning to the ambition which she undoubtedly cherished before that time? She had lately been making rapid advances into Central Asia. Post after post which were once believed to be secure from her approach were dropping into her hands. Her goal of one day became her starting-point of the next. Early in July 1875, Lord Derby received an account of disturbances in the Herzegovina, and something like an organised insurrection in Bosnia. The provinces inhabited by men of alien race and religion over which Turkey rules have always been the source of her weakness. They have always in one form or another invited foreign intervention. Where the intervention was necessary and just they had been its vindication; where it was selfish and unnecessary they had given it its excuse. The revolt which ended in the independence of Greece began in the Danubian provinces. The Crimean War had its origin in the same region. The disturbances in Herzegovina in 1862 and Crete in 1867, had each in its turn almost provoked the intervention of Western Europe. This time it became quite clear in a moment to almost every eye that a crisis had arrived, and that a new chapter of the Eastern Question was to be opened. It is not less Turkey's misfortune than her fault—certainly not less her fault than her misfortune—that her way of governing her foreign provinces has been the cause of so much trouble to Western Europe. Fate has given to the most incapable and worthless Government in the world a task which would strain the resources of the loftiest public spirit and the most accomplished statesmanship. Turkey has to rule over a great variety of nationalities and of creeds all more or less jumbled together within a comparatively limited area. These different sects and races agree in hardly anything but in their common detestation of Ottoman rule. Amongst themselves their rivalries are unceasing and bitter. Again and again Turkey has made it her plausible excuse for maintaining a system of stern repression in the south-east of Europe, that if she lifted a strong hand from these populations they would be found carrying on something like an internecine struggle amongst themselves. The Slav dreads and detests the Greek. The Greek despises the Slav. The Albanian objects alike to Slav and to Greek. The Mahommedan Albanian detests the Catholic Albanian. The Slavs are drawn towards Russia by affinity of race and of religion. But this very fact, which makes in one sense

their political strength, brings with it a certain condition of weakness, because by making them more formidable to Greeks and to Germans it increases the dislike of their growing power, and the determination to oppose it. It would indeed take a very wise, far-seeing, and flexible system of administration to enable a central Government to rule with satisfaction and with success all these differing and contending races. The Turkish Government managed the matter worse than it might seem possible for a Government to do which had been brought for centuries within the action of European civilisation. Turkish rule seems to exist only in one of two extremes. In certain places it means entire relaxation of authority; in others, it means the most rude and rigorous oppression. The hand of the statesman at Constantinople is absolutely unfelt in some of the remoter provinces supposed to be under Turkish sway. The warlike inhabitants of some highland region live their wild and lawless lives, levying black-mail on travellers, and preying on the peaceable commerce of their neighbours with as much indifference to the officials of Stamboul as to the remonstrances of Western statesmanship. But it may be that not far from their frontier-line there is some hapless province whose people feel the hand of Turkey strong and cruel on their necks at every moment of their lives. It happens, as is not unnatural in such a system, that the repression is heaviest where it is least needed, and that in the only cases where severity and rigour might be excused there is an entire relaxation of all central authority. In the condition of things thus hastily sketched out, it is natural that there should be constant upheavings of political and social rebellion. To the Slav populations the neighbourhood of Russia has all the disturbing effect which the propinquity of a magnet might have on the works of some delicate piece of mechanism, or which the neighbourhood of one great planet has on the movements of another. The settlement made by the Crimean War had since that time been gradually breaking down. Servia was an independent State in all but the name. The Danubian provinces, which were to have been governed by separate rulers, came to unite themselves first under one ruler and then into one complete system and at last emerged into the sovereign State of Roumania under the Prussian Prince, Charles of Hohenzollern. Thus the result which most of the European Powers at the time of the Congress of Paris endeavoured to prevent was successfully accomplished in spite of their inclinations. The efforts to keep Bosnia and Herzegovina in quiet subjection to the Sultan proved a miserable failure. The insurrection which now broke out in Herzegovina spread with rapidity. The Turkish statesmen insisted that it was receiving help not only from Russia but from the subjects of Austria as well as from Servia and Montenegro. An appeal was

made to the English Government to use its influence with Austria in order to prevent the insurgents from receiving any assistance from across the Austrian frontier. Servia and Montenegro were appealed to in a similar manner. Lord Derby seems to have acted with indecision and with feebleness. He does not appear to have appreciated the immediate greatness of the crisis, and he offended popular feeling, and even the public conscience, by urging on the Porte that the best they could do was to put down the insurrection as quickly as possible, and not allow it to swell to the magnitude of a question of European interest. Lord Derby knew the anxiety existing among many of the European Powers to interfere on behalf of the Christian populations of Turkey, and it almost seemed as if he dreaded the sort of public scandal this must occasion more than the possibility of Turkey using her repressive powers with an excess of rigour.

The insurrection continued to spread, and at last it was determined by some of the Western Powers that the time had come for European intervention. Count Andrassy, the Austrian Minister, drew up a Note which was to be addressed to the Porte. In this note Austria, Germany, and Russia united in a declaration that the promises of reform made by the Porte had not been carried into effect, and that some combined action by the Powers of Europe was necessary to insist on the fulfilment of the many engagements which Turkey had made and broken. The Note declared that if something of the kind were not done, the Governments of Servia and Montenegro would be compelled by the enthusiasm of their populations to support the insurrection in the Turkish provinces, and that the only means of preventing a general outbreak was a firm resolution on the part of the Western Powers to compel Turkey to redress the grievances of which the Christian populations complained. This Note was dated December 30, 1875, and it was communicated to the Powers which had signed the Treaty of Paris. France and Italy were ready at once to join in it; but England delayed. In fact Lord Derby held off so long that it was not until he had received a despatch from the Porte itself requesting his Government to join in the Note, that he at last consented to take part in the remonstrance. The Turkish Government seem to have desired the presence of England in this movement as one desires the presence of a secret ally. Rightly or wrongly the statesmen of Constantinople had got it into their heads that England was their devoted friend, bound by her own interests to protect them against whatever opposition. Instead therefore of regarding England's co-operation in the Andrassy Note as one other influence brought to compel them to fulfil their engagements, they seem to have accepted it as a secret force working on their side to enable them to escape from their responsibilities. Lord Derby joined in the

Andrassy Note. It was sent to the Porte. The Ottoman Government showed some cleverness in their way of meeting the difficulty. They accepted politely all or nearly all the demands addressed to them, expressed in cool and pleasant terms their entire satisfaction with the kindly suggestions made to them, declared themselves rather gratified than otherwise to have their attention called to any little omissions on their part, and promised to carry out in the readiest manner the suggestions which the Note contained.

Turkey did nothing more than promise. She took no step to meet the demands made by the European Powers. After a few weeks it became perfectly evident that she had not only done nothing but had never intended to do anything. Russia, therefore, proposed that the three Imperial Ministers of the Continent should meet at Berlin and consider what steps should be taken in order to make the Andrassy Note a reality. A document, called the Berlin Memorandum, was drawn up, in which the three Powers pointed out the increasing danger of disturbance in the South-East of Europe, and the necessity for at once carrying into effect the objects of the Andrassy Note. It was proposed that arms should be suspended for two months between the Porte and the insurgent provinces, and that meanwhile peace should be negotiated, and that the Consuls and the Delegates of the European Powers should watch over the carrying out of the proposed reforms. The Memorandum ended by a significant intimation, that if the period of suspension of arms were allowed to pass without the desired objects being attained, or at least approached, there must be an agreement among the Powers as to the further measures which might be called for in the interests of the general peace. The meaning of all this was perfectly clear. The Andrassy Note had invited Turkey's attention to her unfulfilled engagements. Turkey had admitted her deficiencies and promised to supply them. The Berlin Memorandum now proposed to consider the measures by which to enforce on Turkey the fulfilment of her broken promises. It was distinctly implied that should Turkey fail to comply, force would be used to compel her. But, on the other hand, it is clear that this was a menace which would of itself have insured the object. It is out of the question to suppose that Turkey would have thought of resisting the concerted action of England, France, Austria, Germany, Russia, and Italy. The threat of combined action was in itself the surest guarantee of peace. The situation was described very effectively by Lord Granville a year or two after. A man is making a disturbance in the street; if one peaceful inhabitant remonstrates and interferes, it is very likely that his intervention will only lead to further violence; but if half a dozen policemen come up it is more than probable

that the disturber will go quietly away. This is a fair illustration of the condition of things in Europe, and of the sense and spirit of the Berlin Memorandum. Overwhelming and irresistible force was to be brought to bear against Turkey, in order that Turkey might have no possible excuse or opportunity for attempting resistance.

Unfortunately, however, Lord Derby and the English Government did not see their way to join in the Berlin Memorandum. Lord Derby, it seems, was of opinion that a secret agreement between Germany, Austria, and Russia had existed since 1873, and he feared to allow England to be drawn into what might have been a dangerous complication. Other English statesmen were convinced that Russia was all the while secretly stirring up that discontent in the Christian provinces which the Western Powers were using as an argument for intervention. Lord Derby had to decide, and it seems to us he decided in the wrong way. He refused to join in the Berlin Memorandum. Not merely did he refuse to join in it, but he made no suggestion as to any other course which might be taken if the Memorandum were abandoned. The refusal of England was fatal to the project. The Memorandum was never presented. Concert between the European Powers was for the time at an end. From that moment everyone in Western Europe knew that war was certain in the East. A succession of startling events kept public attention on the strain. There was an outbreak of Mussulman fanaticism at Salonica, and the French and German Consuls were murdered. A revolutionary demonstration took place in Constantinople, and the Sultan Abdul Aziz was dethroned. The miserable Abdul Aziz committed suicide in a day or two after. This was the Sultan who had been received in England with so much official ceremony and public acclaim. It was he who had been welcomed at Windsor, had been entertained by the Corporation of London, had been the lion of the season, and the sensation of the sight-seeing public. At the time when he was feasted and applauded in London the Cretan insurrection was going on, and his troops were doing the business of repression with an unsparing cruelty worthy of the Soldans of the Middle Ages. His death by his own hand in a fit of despair, as he found himself dethroned, deserted, lonely, and hated, was a strange close for the career which had begun with so much promise and amid such universal expectation at the time of the Crimean War. His nephew Murad was made Sultan in his place. Murad reigned only three months and was then dethroned, and his brother Hamid put in his place. Suddenly the attention of the English public was called away to events more terrible than palace revolutions in Constantinople. An insurrection had broken out in Bulgaria, and the Turkish Government sent large numbers of Bashi-Bazouks and other irregular troops to crush

it. They did not, however, stay their hand when the insurrection had been crushed. Repression soon turned into massacre. Rumours began to reach Constantinople of hideous wholesale murders committed in Bulgaria. The Constantinople correspondent of the *Daily News* investigated the evidence, and found it but too true. In a few days after accounts were laid before the English public of the deeds which ever since have been known as 'the Bulgarian atrocities.' A story was told of the wholesale massacre of women and children, such as could hardly have found its parallel in the worst days of an earlier Byzantine rule, or under the odious reign of the later Sovereigns of Delhi.

Nothing could have been more ill-advised and unfortunate than the manner in which Mr. Disraeli at first dealt with these terrible stories. He treated them with a levity which jarred harshly on the ears of almost all his listeners. It was plain that he did not believe them or attach any importance to them. No one ever supposed that he was really wanting in humanity; it is certain that if he had believed such crimes were committed he would have been incapable of excusing them or making light of them. But he did not believe in any of the stories; he set them down too hastily as mere figment of rumour, and the newspaper correspondent, and what he called 'coffee-house babble.' He took no trouble to examine the testimony on which they rested. He therefore thought himself warranted in dealing with them as if they were merely stories to laugh at. He evidently did not know much about the Turkish provinces of our day or about Turkish affairs in general. He endeavoured to make out that the Bashi-Bazouks were really the residents and occupiers of Bulgaria. He described them as Circassians who had been settled there long since with the approval of all Europe. He reproached the Liberal party with the lack of sympathy they now showed for a race of beings in whom they once professed such an interest. Mr. Disraeli's ideas of Bulgaria were evidently drawn from vague reminiscences of Voltaire's 'Candide;' and he depicted the Bulgarians as cruel oppressors of the Bashi-Bazouks. He expressed entire scepticism as to the tortures said to have been inflicted on their victims by the Turkish soldiery. Oriental races, he gravely observed, did not usually have recourse to torture, 'they generally terminated their connection with culprits in a more expeditious manner.' All this might have been what the German quack in Scott's 'Antiquary' calls 'very witty and comedy;' but the House was not exactly in the vein for mirth. Mr. Disraeli had always the faculty of persuading himself to believe or disbelieve anything according as he liked. The statesman who could really persuade himself into the belief that Oriental races did not usually have recourse to torture, might well persuade himself

of anything. Probably for the time Mr. Disraeli actually believed that the Bashi-Bazouks were gentle exiles of the class of Thaddeus of Warsaw, sweetly incapable of harming any creature. But the House and the country would have preferred the Prime Minister in a different mood just then. The subject proved to be far too serious for light-minded treatment. Mr. Disraeli felt this himself afterwards, and made an attempt to persuade the country that there was no levity in his talk about the Oriental way of terminating the connection with a culprit. Mr. Baring, the English Consul, sent out specially to Bulgaria to make inquiries, and who was supposed to be in general sympathy with Turkey, reported that no fewer than twelve thousand persons had been killed in the district of Philippopolis. He confirmed substantially some of the most shocking details of the massacre of women and children, which had been given by Mr. MacGahan, a correspondent whom the *Daily News* had sent out to the spot, to see with his own eyes, and report what he saw. There was no disputing the significance of some of that testimony. The defenders of the Turks insisted that the only deaths were those which took place in fight; insurgents on one side, Turkish soldiers on the other. But Mr. Baring, as well as the *Daily News* correspondent, saw whole masses of the dead bodies of women and children piled up in places where the bodies of no combatants were to be seen. The women and children were simply massacred. The Turkish Government may not have known at first of the deeds that were done by their soldiers. But it is certain that after the facts had been forced upon their attention, they conferred new honours on the chief perpetrators of the crimes which shocked the moral sense of all Europe.

Mr. Bright happily described the agitation which followed in England as an uprising of the English people. At first it was an uprising without a leader. Soon, however, it had a chief of incomparable energy and power. Mr. Gladstone came out of his semi-retirement. He threw aside polemics and criticism. He forgot for awhile Homer and the Pope. He flung himself into the agitation against Turkey with the impassioned energy of a youth. He made speeches in the House of Commons and out of it; he attended monster meetings indoors and out of doors; he published pamphlets, he wrote letters, he brought forward motions in Parliament; he denounced the crimes of Turkey and the policy which would support Turkey, with an eloquence that for the time set England aflame. After a while no doubt there set in a sort of reaction against the fervent mood. The country could not long continue in this white heat of excitement. Some men began to protest against 'the sentimental' in politics; others grew tired of hearing Turkey denounced; others again complained that

they had got too much of the Bulgarian atrocities. Moreover, Mr. Disraeli and his supporters were able to work with great effect on that strong deep-rooted feeling of the modern Englishman, his distrust and dread of Russia. Mr. Gladstone was accused of acting in such a manner as to make himself the instrument of Russian designs on Constantinople. He had in his pamphlet, 'Bulgarian Horrors, and the Question of the East,' insisted that the only way to secure any permanent good for the Christian provinces of Turkey was to turn the Turkish officials 'bag and baggage' out of them. What people called the 'bag and baggage' policy was denounced as a demand for the expulsion of the Turks, all the Turks, the Turkish men and women, out of Europe. Of course what Mr. Gladstone meant was exactly what he said, that the rule of Turkish officialism should cease in the Christian provinces; that these provinces should have autonomous Governments subject to the Sultan; not that all the individual Turks should be turned out. But the cry went forth that he had called for the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and that the moment the Turks went out of Constantinople the Russians must come in. Nothing could have been better suited to rouse up reaction and alarm. A sudden and strong revulsion of feeling took place in favour of the Government. Mr. Gladstone was honestly regarded by millions of Englishmen as the friend and the instrument of Russia, Mr. Disraeli as the champion of England, and the enemy of England's enemy. Mr. Disraeli was, like another Chatham, bidding England be of good cheer and hurling defiance at her foes.

Mr. Disraeli? By this time there was no Mr. Disraeli. The 11th of August 1876 was an important day in the parliamentary history of England. Mr. Disraeli made then his last speech in the House of Commons. It was a speech filled for the most part with banter and ridicule directed against those who were leading the agitation against the Government. But towards the close Mr. Disraeli struck a louder and a stronger note. He sustained and defended the policy of the Government as an Imperial policy, the object of which was to maintain the Empire of England, 'Nor will we ever agree to any step, though it may obtain for a moment comparative quiet and a false prosperity, that hazards the existence of that Empire.' The House of Commons little knew that these were the last words it was to hear from Mr. Disraeli. The secret was well kept. It was made known only to the newspapers that night. Next morning all England knew that Benjamin Disraeli had become Earl of Beaconsfield. The title once intended for Burke had come to the author of 'Vivian Grey.' Everybody was well satisfied that if Mr. Disraeli liked an earldom he should have it. His political career had had claims enough

to any reward of the kind that his Sovereign could bestow. If he had battled for honour it was but fair that he should have the prize. Coming as it did just then, the announcement of his elevation to the peerage seemed like a defiance flung in the face of those who would arraign his policy. The attacks made on Mr. Disraeli were to be answered by Lord Beaconsfield; his enemies had become his footstool.

CHAPTER LXV.

THE CONGRESS OF BERLIN.

Lord Beaconsfield went down to the county which he had represented so long, and made a farewell speech at Aylesbury. The occasion must for him have been one to call up genuine emotion. The speech was in many parts worthy of the occasion. Lord Beaconsfield set forth his reasons for consenting to quit that splendid arena on which he had so long played a brilliant part. Years were telling on him, he explained in some sentences full of feeling and of good taste; he was no longer as young as when forty-three years before he addressed the electors of Buckinghamshire in that same place. He said that his colleagues had been more careful of his feelings than Gil Blas was of those of the Archbishop of Granada; but he added that he was less self-complacent than the Archbishop. He was willing therefore to retire from the field in good time, and to be content to serve his country in the more quiet ways of the House of Lords. Unfortunately Lord Beaconsfield soon went on to make a fierce attack on his political opponents. He marred the effect of his speech artistically as well as politically by the overwrought and acrimonious language in which he allowed himself to indulge. Speaking of the 'sublime sentiments' which had been evoked by the crimes done in Bulgaria, he pointed to the danger of designing politicians taking advantage of them 'for their own sinister ends,' and described such conduct as 'worse than any of those Bulgarian atrocities which now occupy attention.' Nothing could be in worse taste. It was impossible to doubt that Lord Beaconsfield's picture of the designing politicians was meant to be understood as a picture of Mr. Gladstone and those who supported him. The controversy, bitter enough before, became still more bitter now. Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone were thrown into as sharp an antagonism as that of two gladiators in a Roman arena or two duellists standing at twelve paces from each other. They had been life-long opponents; this now seemed like a duel to the death.

The policy each represented may be described in a few very summary words. Lord Beaconsfield was for maintaining Turkey at all risks as a barrier against Russia. Mr. Gladstone was for renouncing all responsibility for Turkey and taking the consequences. Men who prided themselves on being practical politicians above all things went naturally with Lord Beaconsfield. Men who held that sound politics cannot exist without sound morals went with Mr. Gladstone. It is our business, the one set of men said, to secure the interests of England: if Turkey is useful to us as a barrier against Russia, we are bound to keep her in her place for our own sake; her private character is of no account to us. The other men argued that it was the duty of England to release herself from all responsibility for the crimes of Turkey, and to refuse to stand in the way of the developing freedom of the Christian populations. 'The public conscience of England,' said the one; 'the interests of England,' said the other. 'Be just and fear not,' Mr. Gladstone urged. 'No sentiment,' rejoined Lord Beaconsfield. 'The crimes of Turkey,' was the cry of one party; 'The ambition of Russia,' made the alarm-note of the other.

Each statesman made a mistake, and each mistake was characteristic of the man. Lord Beaconsfield misunderstood the condition of public feeling and the gravity of the case when he thought he could get rid of the Bulgarian events by a laugh and a light word. Mr. Gladstone afterwards made a mistake when he acted on the assumption that mere sympathy and mere sensibility could long prevail in the English public mind against the traditional distrust of Russia. When Lord Beaconsfield and his supporters once had their opportunity of laying that card, they had the game absolutely in their hands.

The common expectation was soon fulfilled. At the close of June 1876 Servia and Montenegro declared war against Turkey. Servia's struggle was short. The Servians were assisted by the advice and the active presence of a large number of Russian officers who volunteered for the purpose. The small Servian army, however, proved no match for the Turks. At the beginning of September the struggle was over, and Servia was practically at Turkey's feet. The hardy Montenegrin mountaineers held their own stoutly against the Turks everywhere, but they could not seriously influence the fortunes of a war. England proposed an armistice of not less than a month. Turkey delayed, shuffled, paltered, at length suggested an armistice till the end of the following March. The suggestion was preposterous. Such a period of suspense would have been ruinous to Servia and Montenegro, intolerable to Europe. Russia then intervened and insisted upon an armistice at once, and her demand was acceded to by Turkey. Meanwhile the general feeling in England on both sides was

growing stronger and stronger. Public meetings of Mr. Gladstone's supporters were held all over the country, and the English Government was urged in the most emphatic manner to bring some strong influence to bear on Turkey. On the other hand, it cannot be doubted that the common suspicion of Russia's designs began to grow more keen and wakeful than ever. Lord Derby frankly made known to the Emperor Alexander what was thought or feared in England, and the Emperor replied by pledging his sacred word that he had no intention of occupying Constantinople, and that if he were compelled by events to occupy any part of Bulgaria, it should be only provisionally, and until the safety of the Christians should be secured. Then Lord Derby proposed that a Conference of the European Powers should be held at Constantinople in order to agree upon some scheme which should provide at once for the proper government of the various provinces and populations subject to Turkey, and at the same time for the maintenance of the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The proposal for a Conference was accepted by all the Great Powers, and on November 8, 1876, it was announced that Lord Salisbury and Sir Henry Elliott, the English Ambassador at Constantinople, were to attend as the representatives of England.

Lord Beaconsfield was apparently determined to recover the popularity that had been somewhat impaired by his unlucky way of dealing with the massacres of Bulgaria. His plan now was to go boldly in for denunciation of Russia. He sometimes talked of Russia as he might of an enemy who had already declared war against England. On November 9, 1876, he spoke at a banquet given by the new Lord Mayor at the Guildhall. He glorified the strength and the resources of England. If the struggle comes, he said, there is no country so prepared for war as England. 'In a righteous cause, England is not the country that will have to inquire whether she can enter upon a second or a third campaign. In a righteous cause England will commence a fight that will not end until right is done.' It was clear that the allusions in the speech were to Russia. The words about the second and third campaign were of unmistakable application. Either by coincidence or otherwise, the Russian Emperor delivered a speech the very next day to the nobles of Moscow, which sounded like a direct answer to Lord Beaconsfield's challenge. Alexander declared that if he could not succeed in obtaining with the concert of Europe such guarantees as he thought necessary to require of Turkey, he was firmly determined to act independently, and was convinced that the whole of Russia would respond to his summons. The words of Lord Beaconsfield were spoken somewhat late on the evening of Thursday. The Emperor addressed the nobles at Moscow the very next day. Still there was ample

time for the ordinary telegraphic report of Lord Beaconsfield's speech to be in Alexander's hands long before the hour at which he had to address the Moscow assembly. Most persons assumed that the speech of the Russian Emperor was undoubtedly an answer to that of the English Prime Minister. The prospects of a peaceful settlement of the European controversy seemed to become heavily overclouded. Lord Beaconsfield appeared to be holding the dogs of war by the collar, and only waiting for the convenient moment to let them slip. Every eye was turned upon him. He must have felt that his ambition was fast reaching the very seamark of its utmost sail. The decision of peace or war seemed to be absolutely with him. He held the destinies of millions in the hollow of his hand. Everyone knew that some of his colleagues, Lord Derby for example, and Lord Carnarvon, were opposed to any thought of war, and felt almost as strongly for the Christian provinces of Turkey as Mr. Gladstone did. But people shook their heads doubtfully when it was asked whether Lord Derby or Lord Carnarvon, or both combined, could prevail in strength of will against Lord Beaconsfield.

The Conference at Constantinople came to nothing. The Turkish statesmen at first attempted to put off the diplomatists of the West by the announcement that the Sultan had granted a Constitution to Turkey, and that there was to be a Parliament at which representatives of all the provinces were to speak up for themselves. There was in fact a Turkish Parliament called together. The first meeting of the Conference was disturbed by the sound of salvoes of cannon to celebrate the opening of the first Constitutional Assembly of Turkey. Of course the Western statesmen could not be put off by an announcement of this kind. They knew well enough what a Turkish Parliament must mean. A Parliament is not made by the decree of an autocrat calling a number of men into a room and bidding them debate and divide. To have a Parliament there must, first of all, be something like a free people. Europe had seen a brand-new Egyptian Parliament created not long before, and had felt at first a sort of languid curiosity about it; and then after a while learned that it had sunk into the ground or faded away somehow without leaving any trace of its constitutional existence. It seems almost superfluous to say that the Turkish Parliament was ordered to disappear very soon after the occasion passed away for trying to deceive the Great European Powers. Evidently Turkey had got it into her head that the English Government would at the last moment stand by her, and would not permit her to be coerced. It is not certain, perhaps cannot be known during this generation, whether there was any truth in the report so freely spread abroad in England, that private hints were given to Turkish statesmen by an English

diplomatist encouraging them to resist the demands of the Great Powers, and directly or indirectly promising them the support of England. What is certain is, that Turkey held out in the end and refused to come to terms, and the Conference broke up without having accomplished any good. New attempts at arrangement were made between England, Russia, and others of the Great Powers, but they fell through. Some unfortunate cause seemed always to prevent any kind of cordial co-operation. Then at last Russia took the field against Turkey. On April 24, 1877, Russia declared war, and on June 27 a Russian army crossed the Danube and moved towards the Balkans, meeting with comparatively little resistance, while at the same time another Russian force invaded Asia Minor.

For a while the Russians seemed likely to carry all before them. Suddenly, however, it appeared that they had made many mistakes in their arrangements. They had made the one great mistake of altogether undervaluing their enemies. Their preparations were hasty and imperfect. The Turks, to do them justice, have never wanted fighting power. They have at all times shown great strength and skill in the mere work of resistance. Long after they had ceased to be anything of a terror to Europe as an aggressive Power, they again and again showed tremendous strength and energy in defence. In this instance they were quick to see the mistakes which the Russians had made. They turned upon them unexpectedly and made a gallant and almost desperate resistance. One of their commanders, Osman Pasha, suddenly threw up defensive works at Plevna in Bulgaria, a point the Russians had neglected to secure, and maintained himself there, repulsing the Russians many times with great slaughter. For a time success seemed altogether on the side of the Turks, and many people in England were convinced that the Russian enterprise was already an entire failure; that nothing remained for the armies of the Czar but retreat, disaster, and disgrace. Cooler observers, however, still assumed that where great superiority of strength and resources exist, military superiority must come in the end. It was evidently only a question of time to enable Russia to make good her mistakes and to recover her energies. Thus far the defeats of the Russians had really been inflicted by themselves. Their own blunders had given the battle into the hands of their enemies. Taught by experience the Czar confided the direction of the campaign to the hands of General Todleben, the great soldier whose splendid defence of Sebastopol had made the one grand military reputation of the Crimean War. Under his directing skill the fortunes of the campaign soon turned. Just at the very moment when English critics were proclaiming that the campaign in Asia Minor was over, and that Plevna never could be taken, there came a succession of

crushing defeats inflicted by the Russians on the Turks both in Europe and Asia. Kars was taken by assault on November 18, 1877; Plevna surrendered on December 10. At the opening of 1878 the Turks were completely prostrate. The road to Constantinople was clear. Before the English public had time to recover their breath and to observe what was taking place, the victorious armies of Russia were almost within sight of the minarets of Stamboul.

Meanwhile the English Government were taking momentous action. In the first days of 1878 Sir Henry Elliott, who had been Ambassador in Constantinople, was transferred to Vienna, and Mr. Layard, who had been Minister at Madrid, was sent to the Turkish capital to represent England there. This step was doubtless meant as an evidence that the English Government were determined to give to the Sultan an energetic support, but at the same time to exert their influence more decisively than before in compelling him to listen to reason and to friendly remonstrance. Mr. Layard was known to be a strong believer in Turkey; more Turkish in some respects than the Turks themselves. But he was a man of super-abundant energy; of what might be described as boisterous energy. The Ottoman Government could not but accept his appointment as a new and stronger proof that the English Government were determined to stand their friend; but they ought to have accepted it too as evidence that the English Government were determined to use some pressure to make them amenable to reason. Unfortunately it would appear that the Sultan's Government accepted Mr. Layard's appointment in the one sense only and not in the other. Parliament was called together at least a fortnight before the time usual during recent years. The Speech from the Throne announced that her Majesty could not conceal from herself that should the hostilities between Russia and Turkey unfortunately be prolonged 'some unexpected occurrence may render it incumbent on me to adopt measures of precaution.' This looked ominous to those who wished for peace, and it raised the spirits of the war party. There was a very large and a very noisy war party already in existence. It was particularly strong in London. It embraced some Liberals as well as nearly all Tories. It was popular in the music-halls and the public-houses of London. The class whom Prince Bismarck once called the 'gentlemen of the pavement' were in its favour, at least in the metropolis, almost to a gentleman of the pavement. The men of action got a nickname. They were dubbed the Jingo Party. The term, applied as one of ridicule and reproach, was adopted by chivalrous Jingoes as a name of pride. The Jingoes of London, like the Beggars of Flanders, accepted the word of contumely as a title of honour. In order to avoid the possibility of any historical mis-

understanding or puzzlement hereafter about the meaning of Jingo, such as we have heard of concerning that of Whig and Tory, it is well to explain how the term came into existence. Some Tyrtæus of the tap-tub, some Körner of the music-halls, had composed a ballad which was sung at one of these caves of harmony every night amid the tumultuous applause of excited patriots. The refrain of this war-song contained the spirit-stirring words:—

> We don't want to fight, but, by Jingo, if we do,
> We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too.

Some one whose pulses this lyrical outburst of national pride failed to stir, called the party of its enthusiasts the Jingoes. The writer of this book is under the impression that the invention of the name belongs to Mr. George Jacob Holyoake; but he declines to pledge his historical reputation to the fact. The name was caught up at once, and the party were universally known as the Jingoes. The famous adjuration of the lady in the 'Vicar of Wakefield' had proved to be too prophetical. She had sworn 'by the living Jingo;' and now indeed the Jingo was alive.

The Government ordered the Mediterranean fleet to pass the Dardanelles and go up to Constantinople. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that he would ask for a supplementary estimate of six millions for naval and military purposes. Thereupon Lord Carnarvon, the Colonial Secretary, at once resigned. He had been anxious to get out of the Ministry before, but Lord Beaconsfield induced him to remain. He disapproved now so strongly of the despatch of the fleet to Constantinople and the supplementary vote, that he would not any longer defer his resignation. Lord Derby was also anxious to resign and indeed tendered his resignation, but he was prevailed upon to withdraw it. The fleet meanwhile was ordered back from the Dardanelles to Besika Bay. It had got as far as the opening of the Straits when it was recalled. The Liberal Opposition in the House of Commons kept on protesting against the various war measures of the Government, but with little effect. The majority of the Government kept on increasing. The strength of that majority did not lie in mere Jingoism. There can be no doubt that a great many members of the House of Commons voted with Lord Beaconsfield in the sincere conviction that he was the man whom it was safest to trust, and that the protestations of pacific purpose which the Government were always making would be most likely to be realised if Lord Beaconsfield had full power to carry out the policy he thought best. While all this agitation in and out of Parliament was going on; while the Opposition was now proposing and now withdrawing amendments; while the Govern-

ment were protesting their desire for peace, and the champions of the Government out of doors were screaming for war; while the music-halls were cheering for the great name of Jingo, and monster meetings in Hyde Park on either side of the question were turning into mere faction-fights, generally to the defeat and rout of the peace party, the news came that the Turks, utterly broken down, had been compelled to sign an armistice, and an agreement containing a basis of peace, at Adrianople. Then, following quickly on the heels of this announcement, came a report that the Russians, notwithstanding the armistice, were pushing on towards Constantinople with the intention of occupying the Turkish capital.

A cry of alarm and indignation broke out in London. One memorable night a sudden report reached the House of Commons that the Russians were actually in the suburbs of Constantinople. The House for a time almost entirely lost its head. The lobbies, the corridors, St. Stephen's Hall, the great Westminster Hall itself, and Palace Yard beyond it, became filled with wildly excited and tumultuous crowds. If the clamour of the streets at that moment had been the voice of England, nothing could have prevented a declaration of war against Russia. Happily, however, it was proved that the rumour of Russian advance was unfounded. The fleet was now sent in good earnest through the Dardanelles, and anchored a few miles below Constantinople. Russia at first protested that if the English fleet passed the Straits Russian troops ought to occupy the city. Lord Derby was firm, and terms of arrangement were found—English troops were not to be disembarked and the Russians were not to advance. Russia was still open to negotiation.

Probably Russia had no idea of taking on herself the tremendous responsibility of an occupation of Constantinople. She had entered into a treaty with Turkey, the famous treaty of San Stefano, by which she secured for the populations of the Christian provinces almost complete independence of Turkey, and was to create a great new Bulgarian State with a seaport on the Egean Sea. The English Government refused to recognise this treaty. Lord Derby contended that it involved an entire readjustment of the Treaty of Paris, and that that could only be done with the sanction of the Great Powers assembled in Congress. Lord Beaconsfield openly declared that the Treaty of San Stefano would put the whole south-east of Europe directly under Russian influence. Russia offered to submit the Treaty to the perusal, if we may use the expression, of a Congress; but argued that the stipulations which merely concerned Turkey and herself were for Turkey and herself to settle between them. This was obviously an untenable position. It is out of the question to suppose that, as long as European policy is conducted on its present principles, the

Great Powers of the West could consent to allow Russia to force on Turkey any terms she might think proper. Turkey meanwhile kept feebly moaning that she had been coerced into signing the treaty. The Government determined to call out the Reserves, to summon a contingent of Indian troops to Europe, to occupy Cyprus, and to make an armed landing on the coast of Syria. All these resolves were not, however, made known at the time. Every one felt sure that something important was going on, and public expectancy was strained to the full. On March 28, 1878, the House of Lords met as usual. Lord Derby was seen to come in and seat himself not with the Ministers on the front bench to the right of the Lord Chancellor, but below the gangway on the same side. This created some surprise; but for a moment some peers and strangers believed that he had only taken his seat there for the purpose of conversing with a friend who sat behind. The Ministers came in one by one and took their places. The business of the House began. Lord Derby remained as before in a seat below the gangway, and then it was clear to everyone that he was no longer a member of the Government. In a few moments he rose and made his explanation. Measures, he said, had been resolved upon of which he could not approve, and he had therefore resigned his office. He did not give any explanation of the measures to which he objected. Lord Beaconsfield spoke a few words of good feeling and good taste after Lord Derby's announcement. He had hoped, he said, that Lord Derby would soon come to occupy the place of Prime Minister which he now held; he dwelt upon their long friendship. Not much was said on either side of what the Government were doing. The last hope of the Peace Party seemed to have vanished when Lord Derby left his office.

Lord Salisbury was made Foreign Minister. He was succeeded in the India Office by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, now created Lord Cranbrook. Colonel Stanley, brother of Lord Derby, took the office of Minister of War in Lord Cranbrook's place. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach had already become Secretary for the Colonies on the resignation of Lord Carnarvon. The post of Irish Secretary had been given to Mr. James Lowther, an unfortunate appointment, as it afterwards proved. Lord Salisbury's first act in the office of Foreign Secretary, was to issue a circular in which he declared that it would be impossible for England to enter a congress which was not free to consider the whole of the provisions of the Treaty of San Stefano. The very day after Parliament had adjourned for the Easter recess, the Indian Government received orders to send certain of their troops to Malta. This was a complete surprise to the country. We may anticipate matters a little by saying that nothing in the end did more harm to Lord Beaconsfield's Government than his constant practice of

taking the country by surprise. Some of his more vulgar admirers were delighted by these successive sensations. They thought it highly agreeable to be ruled by a minister who had always something new to amuse and excite them. But the common sense of the country was painfully shaken by these galvanic shocks administered every now and then. The summoning of the troops to Malta became the occasion also for a very serious controversy on a grave constitutional question. It was debated in both Houses of Parliament. The Opposition contended that the constitutional principle which left it for Parliament to fix the number of soldiers the Crown might maintain in England was reduced to nothingness if the Prime Minister could at any moment, without even consulting Parliament, draw what reinforcements he thought fit from the almost limitless resources of India. No reasonable person can deny the justice of this argument. It only needs to be stated in order to enforce itself. The majority then supporting Lord Beaconsfield were not, however, much disposed to care about argument or reason. They were willing to approve of any step Lord Beaconsfield might think fit to take.

Prince Bismarck had often during these events shown an inclination to exhibit himself in the new attitude of a peaceful mediator. He now interposed again and issued invitations for a congress to be held in Berlin to discuss the whole contents of the Treaty of San Stefano. After some delay, discussion, and altercation, Russia agreed to accept the invitation on the conditions proposed, and it was finally resolved that a Congress should assemble in Berlin on the approaching June 13. To this Congress it was supposed by most persons that Lord Salisbury would be sent to represent England. Much to the surprise of the public, Lord Beaconsfield announced that he himself would attend, accompanied by Lord Salisbury, and conduct the negotiations in Berlin. The event was we believe without precedent. Never before had an English Prime Minister left the country whilst Parliament was sitting to act as the representative of England in a foreign capital. The part he had undertaken to play suited Lord Beaconsfield's love for the picturesque and the theatrical. It seemed a proper culmination to his career that he should take his seat at a great European Council chamber, and there help in dictating terms of peace to Europe. The temptation was irresistible to a nature so fond of show, and state, and pomp. Lord Beaconsfield went to Berlin. His journey thither was a sort of triumphal progress. At every great city, almost at every railway station as he passed, crowds turned out, drawn partly by curiosity, partly by admiration, to see the English statesman whose strange and varied career had so long excited the wondering attention of Europe. The Congress was held in the Radzivill Palace, a building with a plain unpre-

tending exterior in one of the principal streets of Berlin, and then in the occupation of Prince Bismarck. The Prince himself presided, and it is said, departed from the usual custom of diplomatic assemblages by opening the proceedings in English. The use of our language was understood to be a kindly and somewhat patronising deference to the English Prime Minister, whose knowledge of spoken French was supposed to have fallen somewhat into decay of late years. The Congress discussed the whole or nearly the whole of the questions opened up by the recent war. Greece claimed to be heard there, and after some delay and some difficulty was allowed to plead in her own cause.

The Congress of Berlin had to deal with four or five great distinct questions. It had to deal with the condition of the Provinces or States nominally under the suzerainty of Turkey. It had then to deal with the populations of alien race and religion actually under Turkey's dominion. It had to take into its consideration the claims of the Greeks; that is, of the kingdom of Greece for extended frontier, and of the Greek populations under Turkey for a different system of rule. Finally it had to deal with the Turkish possessions in Asia. The great object of most of the statesmen who were concerned in the preparation of the Treaty which came of the Congress, was to open for the Christian populations of the South-east of Europe a way into gradual self-development and independence. But on the other hand it must be owned that the object of some of the Powers, and especially, we are afraid, of the English Government, was rather to maintain the Ottoman Government than to care for the future of the Christian races. These two influences acting and counteracting on each other produced the Treaty of Berlin. That Treaty recognised the complete independence of Roumania, of Servia, and of Montenegro, subject only to certain stipulations with regard to religious equality in each of these States. To Montenegro it gave a seaport and a slip of territory attaching to it. Thus one great object of the mountaineers was accomplished. They were able to reach the sea. The Treaty created, north of the Balkans, a State of Bulgaria: a much smaller Bulgaria than that sketched in the Treaty of San Stefano. Bulgaria was to be a self-governing State tributary to the Sultan and owning his suzerainty, but in other respects practically independent. It was to be governed by a prince whom the population were to elect with the assent of the Great Powers and the confirmation of the Sultan. It was stipulated that no member of any reigning dynasty of the Great European Powers should be eligible as a candidate. South of the Balkans, the Treaty created another and a different kind of State, under the name of Eastern Roumelia. That State was to remain under the direct political and military authority of the

Sultan, but it was to have, as to its interior condition, a sort of 'administrative autonomy,' as the favourite diplomatic phrase then was. East Roumelia was to be ruled by a Christian Governor, and there was a stipulation that the Sultan should not employ any irregular troops, such as the Circassians and the Bashi-bazouks, in the garrisons of the frontier. The European Powers were to arrange in concert with the Porte for the organisation of this new State. As regarded Greece, it was arranged that the Sultan and the King of the Hellenes were to come to some understanding for a modification of the Greek frontier, and that if they could not arrange this between themselves, the Great Powers were to have the right of offering, that is to say, in plain words, of insisting on, their mediation. The Sultan also undertook 'scrupulously to apply to Crete the organic law of 1868.' Bosnia and the Herzegovina were to be occupied and administered by Austria. Roumania undertook, or in other words was compelled to undertake, to return to Russia that portion of Bessarabian territory which had been detached from Russia by the Treaty of Paris. Roumania was to receive in compensation some islands forming the Delta of the Danube, and a portion of the Dobrudscha. As regarded Asia, the Porte was to cede to Russia, Ardahan, Kars, and Batoum, with its great port on the Black Sea.

The Treaty of Berlin gave rise to keen and adverse criticism. Much complaint was made of the curious arrangement which divided the Bulgarian populations into two separate States under wholly different systems of government. This, it was said, is only the example of the Congress of Paris over and over again. It is just such another futile attempt as that which was made to keep the Danubian principalities separate from each other in the hope of thereby diminishing the influence of Russia, and securing greater influence for Turkey. The simple and natural arrangement, it was urged, would have been to unite the whole of these populations at once under one form of government. To that, it was insisted, they must come in the end, and the interval of separation is only more likely to be successfully employed by Russia in spreading her influence, because each division of the population is so small as to be unable to offer any effective resistance to her advances. On the other hand, it was argued by the supporters of the Treaty, that the Bulgarian question was not so simple and straightforward as might have been supposed; that there was a considerable variety of races, of religions, and of interests enclosed in what some people chose to call Bulgaria, and that no better arrangement could be found than to keep one portion still under the protection of the Porte, while allowing to the other something that might almost be styled independence. The arrangement which gave Bosnia and Herzegovina to the occupation of Austria

became afterwards the subject of sharp controversy. The Prime Minister himself at a later day actually declared that this step was taken in order to put another Power, not Russia, on the high road to Constantinople if the succession to the Porte should ever become vacant. On the other hand Austrian statesmen themselves denied that any such intention was in the mind of the Emperor of Austria. They insisted that the occupation was accepted by Austria out of no feeling of individual advantage, but on the contrary, at much inconvenience and some sacrifice, and solely in the interest of the common peace of Europe. Very bitter indeed was the controversy provoked by the surrender to Russia of the Bessarabian territory taken from her at the time of the Crimean War. Roumania, the gallant and spirited little State which had thriven surprisingly under her new system of government, was thus plundered in order to satisfy Russia's self-love. Russia had set her heart upon recovering every single one of the advantages, real or only nominal, which she had been compelled to sacrifice at the close of the Crimean War. This was the last remnant of the victory obtained over her at so much cost and after such a struggle by the combined Powers of the West. Now she had regained everything. The Black Sea was open to her war vessels, and its shores to her arsenals. The last slight trace of Crimean humiliation was effaced in the restoration of the territory of Bessarabia. Profound disappointment was caused among many European populations, as well as among the Greeks themselves, by the arrangements for the rectification of the Greek frontier. The impression left in the minds of the Greek delegates was that the influence of the English Ministers had in every instance been given in favour of Turkey and against the claims of Greece. Thus, speaking roughly, it may be said that the effect of the Congress of Berlin on the mind of Europe was to make the Christian populations of the south-east believe that their friend was Russia and their enemies were England and Turkey; to make the Greeks believe that France was their especial friend, and that England was their enemy; and to create an uncomfortable impression everywhere that the whole Congress was a pre-arranged business, a transaction with the foregone conclusion, a dramatic performance carefully rehearsed before in all its details and merely enacted as a pageant on the Berlin stage.

The latter impression was converted into a conviction by certain subsequent revelations. It came out that Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury had been entering into secret engagements both with Russia and with Turkey. The secret engagement with Russia was the occasion of a good deal of scandal. The secret engagement was prematurely divulged by the heedlessness or the treachery of a person who had been called in at

a small temporary rate of pay to assist in copying dispatches in the Foreign Office. The authenticity of his revelation was denied in the first instance with what appeared to be genuine earnestness, but it came out that the denial was a mere quibble as to the meaning of the word 'authentic.' The version of the agreement thus prematurely published by the *Globe*, a London evening paper, was to all intents and purposes perfectly genuine. The secret Treaty proved to be almost exactly as it had been described in advance. It was signed at the Foreign Office on May 30, some days before Prince Bismarck issued his invitation to the Congress. It was a memorandum determining the points on which an understanding had been come to between Russia and Great Britain, and a mutual engagement for the English and Russian plenipotentiaries at the Congress. It bound England to put up with the handing back of Bessarabia and the cession of the port of Batoum. It conceded all the points in advance which the English people believed that their plenipotentiaries had been making brave struggle for at Berlin. Lord Beaconsfield had not then frightened Russia into accepting the Congress on his terms. The call of the Indian troops to Malta had not done the business; nor the reserves, nor the vote of the six millions. Russia had gone into the Congress because Lord Salisbury had made a secret engagement with her that she should have what she specially wanted. The Congress was only a piece of pompous and empty ceremonial.

Another secret engagement was that entered into with Turkey. The English Government undertook to guarantee to Turkey her Asiatic possessions against all invasion on condition that Turkey handed over to England the island of Cyprus for her occupation. Lord Beaconsfield afterwards explained that Cyprus was to be used as 'a place of arms;' in other words, England had now formally pledged herself to defend and secure Turkey against all invasion or aggression, and occupied Cyprus in order to have a more effectual vantage ground from which to carry on this project. The difference, therefore, between the policy of the Conservative Government and the policy of the Liberals was now thrown into the strongest possible relief. Mr. Gladstone, and those who thought with him, had always made it a principle of their policy that England had no special and separate interest in maintaining the independence of Turkey. Lord Beaconsfield now declared it to be the cardinal principle of his policy that England specially, England above all, was concerned to maintain the integrity and the independence of the Turkish Empire; that in fact the security of Turkey was as much part of the duty of English statesmanship as the security of the Channel Islands or of Malta.

For the moment the policy of Lord Beaconsfield seemed to be entirely in

the ascendant. His return home was celebrated with pomp and circumstance befitting the temperament of the statesman, if not indeed quite becoming of such an occasion. The Prime Minister got a great public reception in London. Crowds awaited him at the railway station, which was gaudily decorated and bedizened for the occasion. He made a conquering hero's progress through the streets. Arrived at the Foreign Office, he addressed from the windows an excited and tumultuous crowd, and he proclaimed, in words which became memorable, that he had brought back 'Peace with Honour.' This, so far as human eye can yet see, was the climax of that strange career. From the day when Mr. Disraeli first addressed the electors of Wycombe, from the day when his first speech was hooted and laughed at in the House of Commons, up to this triumphal reception in the streets of London, and this oration from the windows of the Foreign Office, what a distance he had traversed! Years of struggle against what seemed almost insurmountable difficulties; years of steady faith in himself undisturbed by almost universal ridicule; years of rise and fall, of action and reaction, of success and disaster, had conducted him appropriately to this climax. At this moment he was probably the most conspicuous public man in the world, unless we make one single exception in favour of Prince Bismarck. He had attained to a position of almost unrivalled popularity in England. Not even in his most successful days was Lord Palmerston ever pursued by such a clamour of noisy public acclamation. The head of the English Prime Minister might well have been turned as he stood at the window of the Foreign Office and addressed his few oracular words to the crowd, and heard the wild cheering which followed, and knew that all the world had its eyes then fixed on that single figure. He ought to have followed classic advice and sacrificed at that moment his dearest possession to the gods. No man without sacrifice could buy the lease of such a position, and the endurance of such a success.

Meanwhile, so far as could be judged by external symptoms, and in the Metropolis, Mr. Gladstone and his followers were down to their lowest depth, their very zero of unpopularity. The London morning newspapers, with the one conspicuous exception of the *Daily News*, were entirely on the side of Lord Beaconsfield. Indeed, with the exception of the *Daily News* and the *Echo*, there were no London daily papers of any literary name, no daily papers lying on club tables, which had not declared themselves emphatically in support of Lord Beaconsfield against Mr. Gladstone. The cheap weekly papers, which were read by hundreds of thousands of the working population, were not known to the calculations of society. Nor did society concern itself much about the public opinion of the provinces. In the Midland Counties, and still more especially in

the North of England, the condition of public feeling was somewhat different from that of London. In the provinces men examined more coolly the political conditions. They were not carried away by the gossip of the House of Commons and the clubs, and the influence of that which in London is called society. In the provinces on the whole, Liberalism still remained popular. Mr. Gladstone would still have been sure of the cheers of a great provincial meeting. But there came a day in London when, passing with his wife through one of the streets, he was compelled to seek the shelter of a friendly hall-door in order to escape from the threatening demonstrations of a little mob of patriots boisterously returning from a Jingo carnival.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE ANTI-CLIMAX OF IMPERIALISM.

During the excitement caused by the preparations for the Congress of Berlin a long career came quietly to a close. On May 28, 1878, Lord Russell died at his residence, Pembroke Lodge, Richmond. He may be said to have faded out of life, to have ceased to live, rather than to have died; so quiet, so gradual, almost imperceptible was the passing away. Not many days before his death, on May 9, a deputation of representative and distinguished Nonconformists had waited upon him to present him with an address on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, a reform of which he was the great promoter. Lord Russell was not able to receive the deputation; his wife and son spoke for him. He had not for some time taken any active part in public affairs. We have already in this book spoken of his political career as closed. Now and then some public event aroused his attention, and he addressed a letter to one of the newspapers. He wrote as a man speaks, who, sinking quietly and gradually into death, is suddenly roused to interest in the affairs of the living by catching some words of a half-whispered conversation around him, and who murmurs some sentences of faint remonstrance or advice. There was something strangely pathetic in these utterances, with their imperfect application to the actual condition of things around, and the testimony they bore to the fading man's inextinguishable interest in the progress of living history. To the last moments of his life Lord Russell refused to surrender wholly his concern in the affairs of men. The world listened respectfully to these few occasional words from one who had borne a leader's part in some of the greatest political struggles of the

century, and who still from the very edge of the grave was anxious to offer his whisper of counsel or of warning. No one felt bound to weigh too carefully the substantial and practical value of the advice, under the altered conditions of that actual time to which Lord Russell could hardly be said to belong any more. His had been on the whole a great career. He had not only lived through great changes, he had helped to accomplish some of the greatest changes his time had known. His life was singularly unselfish. He was often eager and pushing where he believed that he saw his way to do something needful, and men confounded the zeal of a cause with the eagerness of personal ambition. He never cared for money, and his original rank raised him above any possible consideration for enhanced social distinction. He had made many mistakes; but those who knew him best prized most highly both his political capacity and his personal character. His later years were made happy and smooth by all that the love of a household could do. He had lost a son, a young man of much political promise, Lord Amberley, who died in 1876; but on the whole he had suffered less in his later time than is commonly the lot of those who live to extreme old age. The time of his death was in a certain sense appropriate. His public career had just begun at the time of the Congress of Vienna; it closed with the preparations for the Congress of Berlin.

Why did not Lord Beaconsfield sacrifice to the gods his dearest possession, his political majority, immediately after the triumphal return from Berlin? The opinion of nearly all who pretended to form a judgment was, that at that time the great majority of the constituents were with him. He seemed to have reached the zenith of his own power, and to have accomplished that object which is held so dear by a certain class of Englishmen, that of making the influence of England predominant over the councils of Europe. It is said that he was strongly advised by some of his northern supporters not to put the country then to the cost of a general election. Trade had been depressed for some time. The depression was due in the first instance to causes which had no concern with politics, but it had of course been made much deeper by the anxiety and uneasiness which the too enterprising policy of the Government kept alive in these countries. It was therefore strongly pressed on Lord Beaconsfield that especially in the northern counties, where he had many influential supporters, the drain caused by bad trade had been so heavy that it would be unfair to hasten a dissolution, and thus impose large and at that time unnecessary cost on the constituencies. Whatever the reason may have been, the expected dissolution did not take place, and from that time Lord Beaconsfield never had any chance of a successful appeal to the country. From that time the popularity of his Government began to go down and

down. Many things were against them for which they were not responsible, many things for which they had made themselves distinctly responsible. The badness of trade and the general depression were no fault of theirs to begin with, but, as we have just said, they aggravated every evil of this kind by the strain on which they kept the expectation of the country. Their domestic policy had not been successful. They had attempted many large measures and failed to carry them through. They had not satisfied the country party, to whom they owed so much. The malt tax remained a grievance, as it had been for generations. The Government had got into trouble with the Home Rule party. Mr. Butt had been failing in physical power and in influence for some time. His place as a leader had long been practically disputed by Mr. Parnell, and was evidently about to be taken by him. Mr. Parnell, a young man but lately come into Parliament, soon proved himself the most remarkable politician who had arisen on the field of Irish politics since the day when John Mitchell was conveyed away from Dublin to Bermuda. The tactics adopted by Mr. Parnell annoyed and discredited the Government. Good-natured men of respectable ability and no great force of character, like Sir Stafford Northcote, were wholly unable to cope with the pertinacity and policy of such an antagonist. The country blamed the Ministry, it scarcely knew why, for the manner in which the policy called obstructive had been allowed to come into force. It was evident that a new chapter in Irish agitation was opening, and those who disliked the prospect felt inclined to lay the blame on the Government, as if, because they happened to be in office, they must be responsible for everything that took place during their official reign. All these influences combined were telling against Lord Beaconsfield's administration. Perhaps had he been still in the House of Commons, and still in the possession of his full physical vigour, he might have done something to maintain the credit of his Government. But in the quiet shelter of the House of Lords he could only now and then make a show speech in which he usually succeeded in convincing the public of his entire independence and isolation from the policy and the purposes of his colleagues. Scarcely ever was a Ministerial explanation of any important part of the Government policy given in the House of Commons without its being followed by some explanation breathing a totally different spirit, and conveyed in utterly different words, from the lips of Lord Beaconsfield. In the House of Commons, Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Cross almost invariably endeavoured to minimise and reduce to the most practicable limits the objects of the foreign policy of the Government. In the House of Lords, the Prime Minister almost invariably endeavoured to magnify his office and his mission, and to insist

upon it that every step taken by him in Foreign affairs was part of a great, new, ambitious, and imperial policy. Most of all, the Ministry suffered from the effect produced upon the country by the smaller wars into which they had plunged.

The first of these was the invasion of Afghanistan. This was part of the great Imperial policy which Lord Lytton was sent to carry out in India. The Government determined to send a mission to Shere Ali, one of the sons of Dost Mahomed, and then the ruler of Cabul. During the time when it was still uncertain whether England and Russia would not be at war, the Russian Government appear to have sent an envoy of their own to Cabul, with the object no doubt of obtaining the direct or indirect assistance of Shere Ali. The English Government determined to guard against possible danger for the future by establishing a distinct and paramount influence in Afghanistan. Shere Ali strongly objected to receive either a mission or a permanent Resident. The mission was sent forward. It was so numerous as to look rather like an army than an embassy. It started from Peshawur on September 21, 1878, but was stopped on the frontier by an officer of Shere Ali who objected to its passing through until he had received authority from his master. This delay was magnified, by the news first received here, into an insolent rebuff. The unlucky performance which had been attempted in France, in 1870, was by chance, or error, or purpose, enacted over again on a small scale in England. The English Envoy was made to play the part of the French Ambassador, and the passion of the English people for the moment became inflamed with the idea of an insult to the English flag. The Envoy was ordered to go on, and before long the mission was turned into an invasion. The Afghans made but a poor resistance, and the English troops soon occupied Cabul. Shere Ali fled from his capital. One portion of our forces occupied Candahar. Lord Beaconsfield announced that the object of the invasion in Afghanistan was satisfactorily accomplished; that England was now in possession of the three great highways which connected Afghanistan with India, that he hoped the country would long remain in possession of them, and that it had secured a frontier which would render the Indian Empire invulnerable. Shere Ali died, and Yakoob Khan, his son, became his successor. Yakoob Khan presented himself at the British camp which had now been established at Gandamak, a place between Jellalabad and Cabul. Here the Treaty of Gandamak was signed on May 5, 1879. The Indian Government undertook by this Treaty to pay the Ameer 60,000*l.* a year, and the Ameer ceded, or appeared to cede, what Lord Beaconsfield called the 'scientific frontier,' and agreed to admit a British representative to reside in Cabul.

On those conditions he was to be supported against any foreign enemy with money and arms, and if necessary, with men. Hardly had the country ceased clapping its hands and exulting over the quiet establishment of an English Resident at Cabul, when a telegram arrived announcing that the events of November 1841 had repeated themselves in that city. The tragedy of Sir Alexander Burnes was enacted over again. Down almost to its smallest details that terrible drama was played once more. Only the actors were new. A popular rising took place in Cabul, exactly as had happened in 1841. Sir Louis Cavagnari, the English Envoy, and all or nearly all the members of his staff were murdered. There was nothing to be done for it but to invade Cabul over again, and take vengeance for the massacre of the English officers. The British troops hurried up, fought their way with their usual success, and on the Christmas Eve of 1879 Cabul was again entered. Yakoob Khan, accused of complicity in the massacre, was sent as a prisoner to India, possibly, as was then thought, to await his trial for a share in the murder. Cabul was occupied, but not possessed. The English Government held in their power just as much of Afghanistan as they could cover with their encampments. They held it for just so long as they kept the encampments standing. The Treaty of Gandamak was of course nothing but waste paper. The scientic frontier had not even been defined. It was to have been provided for in a supplementary document to the Treaty, which was to set forth its precise line and extent. This part of the business was never accomplished, and the terms of the bond, so far as they had any real existence at all, were washed off the paper in the blood of Sir Louis Cavagnari. We had got into Afghanistan. There now remained a far greater difficulty—to get out of it. 'Blood will have blood,' says Macbeth.

The war in South Africa was, if possible, less justifiable. It was also, if possible, more disastrous. The region which we call South Africa consisted of several States, native and European, under various forms of authority. Cape Colony and Natal were for a long time the only English dominions. The Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic were Dutch settlements. In 1848, the British Government had established its authority over the Orange River territory, but it afterwards transferred its powers to a provisional Government of Dutch origin. The Transvaal was a Dutch Republic with which we had until quite lately no direct connection. In 1852, the English Government resolved that its operations and its responsibilities in South Africa should be limited to Cape Colony and Natal, and distinctly recognised the independence of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic. Besides these States of what we may call European origin, there were a great many native communities, some

of which had enough of organisation to be almost regarded as States. The Kaffirs, as we all know, had often given us trouble before. The supposed insurrection of Langalibalele had been suppressed in 1874 with great severity, and Langalibalele had himself been captured, tried, and imprisoned. The almost universal opinion of independent observers was that Langalibalele had not intended insurrection, and that he had been unfairly and unjustly dealt with. It is important to mention the fact here, because there can be no doubt that the treatment of Langalibalele had considerable influence on the minds of others of the native chiefs. The most powerful tribe in South Africa was that of the Zulus. Natal was divided from Zulu territory only by the River Tugela. The ruler of the Zulu tribe, Cetewayo, owed his throne to a great victory which he obtained over his brother, who was killed in the battle along with some three thousand of his adherents. Cetewayo was much inclined to a cordial alliance with the English, and was anxious to receive his crown as a kind of gift at our hands. Although he did not owe his power in any direct sense to us, yet he went through a form, in which our Representatives bore their part, of accepting his crown at the hands of the English Sovereign. He was often involved in disputes with the Boers, or Dutch-descended occupants of the Transvaal Republic. Other native tribes were still more directly and often engaged in quarrels with the Boers. The Transvaal Republic made war upon one of the greatest of these African chiefs, Secocoeni, and had the worst of it in the struggle. The Republic was badly managed in every way. Its military operations were a total failure; its exchequer was ruined; there seemed hardly any chance of maintaining order within its frontier, and the prospect appeared at the time to be that its South African enemies would overrun the whole of the Republic; would thus come up to the borders of the English States, and possibly might soon involve the English settlers themselves in war. Under these conditions a certain number of disappointed or alarmed inhabitants of the Transvaal made some kind of indirect proposition to England that the Republic should be annexed to English territory. Sir Theophilus Shepstone was sent out by England to ascertain whether this offer was genuine and national. He seems to have been entirely mistaken in his appreciation of the condition of things. Acting under the impression that the Boers were willing to accept English authority, he boldly, one might say lawlessly, declared the Republic a portion of the dominions of Great Britain. Meanwhile there had been a dispute going on for a long time between Cetewayo, the Zulu King, and the Transvaal Republic about a certain disputed strip of land. The dispute was referred to the arbitration of England, with whom Cetewayo was then on the most

friendly terms. Four English arbitrators decided that the disputed strip of territory properly belonged to the Zulu nation.

Meanwhile, Sir Bartle Frere was sent out as Lord High Commissioner. From the moment of his appearance on the scene the whole state of affairs seems to have undergone a complete change. Sir Bartle Frere kept back the award of the arbitrators for several months, unwilling to hand over any new territory unconditionally to Cetewayo, whom he regarded as a dangerous enemy and an unscrupulous despot. During this time a hostile feeling was growing up in the mind of Cetewayo. It was not mere enmity; it was chiefly a fear that some treachery was being planned against him. He could not but see that a total change had taken place in the demeanour of the English Representatives since the occupation of the Transvaal. He had constantly before his mind the fate of Langalibalele. He appears to have really become mastered by the conviction that the English were determined to find a pretext for making war on him, for annexing his territory, and for sending him to prison, as had been done to Langalibalele When such a feeling as this exists on one side or the other, it is easy to imagine that cause of complaint must soon arise. On the English side there was an inclination to regard as offensive preparations which Cetewayo insisted he meant purely as measures of defence. Sir Bartle Frere was a man who had many times rendered great service to England. He had been Chief Commissioner in Scinde from 1852 to 1859, and had shown great ability and energy during the Indian Mutiny. Since that he had been one of the Council of the Viceroy of India; he had been for some years Governor of Bombay, and he had been appointed to the Council of the Secretary of the State here at home. He had been sent upon an important mission to the Sultan of Zanzibar in 1872, the object of which was to endeavour to obtain the suppression of the slave trade, and he succeeded. The Sultan entered into a treaty for the putting down of the trade, and coming to London in 1875 was the small 'fulvus leo' or 'tawny lion' of a season. Sir Bartle Frere seems to have been really filled with that imperial instinct about which other men only talked. He seems to have had in him something of the Cromwell combined perhaps with a good deal of the William Penn. His was a strong nature with an imperious will and an inexhaustible energy. He was undoubtedly conscientious and high-principled according to his lights. Given a great field of action, it is possible that he might have made a deep mark upon the history of his time. The fortune which lately confined his energies to South Africa turned almost into the ridiculous what might, under more favourable conditions, have been the sublime. He appears to have been influenced by two strong ambitions; to spread the Gospel and to extend the territory of England. It is said that in Asia he saw little opportunity

for promulgating Christianity, and that he yearned for Africa as a more promising scene for such a labour. In Africa his mind appears to have become at once possessed with the conviction that alike for the safety of the whites and the improvement of the coloured races it would be necessary to extend the government of England over the whole southern portion of that continent, and to efface the boundaries of native tribes by blending them all into one imperial confederation.

Cetewayo seems to have had considerable military ability and a certain degree of political intelligence. His position made him a rival to Sir Bartle Frere's policy, and Sir Bartle Frere appears to have made up his mind that these two stars were not to keep their motion in one sphere, and that South Africa was not to brook the double rule of the English commissioner and the Zulu king. Sir Bartle Frere kept the award of the four English arbitrators in his hands for some months without taking any action upon it, and when he did at length announce it to Cetewayo he accompanied it with an ultimatum declaring that the Zulu army must at once be disbanded and must return to their homes. This was in point of fact a declaration of war. The English troops immediately invaded the Zulu country, and almost the first news that reached England of the progress of the war was the story of the complete and terrible defeat of an English force on January 22, 1879. Not within the memory of any living man had so sudden and complete a disaster fallen upon English arms. Englishmen were wholly unused to the very idea of English troops being defeated in the field. The story that an English force had been surprised, out-generaled, out-fought, completely defeated by half-naked savages, came on the country with a shock never felt since at least the time of the disasters of Cabul and the Jugdulluk Pass. Of course the disaster was retrieved. Lord Chelmsford, the Commander-in-Chief (son of the Lord Chelmsford just dead who had been twice Lord Chancellor), only wanted time, in homely language, to pull himself together in order to recover his position. The war soon came to the end which everyone must have expected, first the defeat of the Zulu king and then his capture.

One melancholy incident made the war memorable not only to England but to Europe. The young French Prince Louis Napoleon, who had studied in English military schools, felt a strong desire to vary the somewhat mournful monotony of his life by taking part in the campaign. He was influenced in some measure by a desire to fight under the English flag; but it must be owned that he was influenced much more strongly by a wish to play to a French popular audience. He persuaded himself that it would greatly increase his chances of recovering the throne of France if he could exhibit himself to the eyes of the French public as a bold and brilliant young soldier. He therefore seized the opportunity of the Zulu

campaign to offer his services, and attach himself as a volunteer to Lord Chelmsford's staff. During one of the episodes of the war he and some of his companions were surprised by a body of Zulus. Others escaped, but Prince Louis Napoleon was killed. The news of his death created a great shock in England. Everyone was sorry for the young gallant life so uselessly thrown away. Still more deep was the regret felt for the position of the bereaved mother. Hardly has any history a tale more tragic than hers. So sudden and splendid an elevation, so brilliant a career, so complete a fall, such an accumulation of sorrow, is hardly equalled even in the story of Marie Antoinette. Now in the autumn of her life she was left absolutely alone. Youth, beauty, Imperial throne, husband, son, all were gone. It was natural that considerations such as these should throw a halo of melancholy romance round the fate of the young Prince Louis Napoleon, and should rouse in this country an amount of sympathy which harsher critics condemned as sentimental, and even as maudlin. It must be admitted that the poor young Prince fell in a quarrel which was not his, in which he had neither right nor duty to interfere, and which he had taken on himself with a purely personal and political motive. Princes in exile have many times borne arms in quarrels not their own. It is one of the privileges and one of the consolations of exile thus to be enabled to lend a helping hand to a foreign cause. But then the cause must be great and just; it must have some noble principle to inspire it. When the Orleanist Princes fought under the flag of the United States, they were contending for a principle dear to the lovers of freedom in every country in the world, a principle which it is the part of a Frenchman as well as an American to sustain. But the Zulu war was not in any sense a war of principle. It was not even a national English war. It was not a war with which the English people had any sympathy whatever. It was not even a war of which the English Government approved. For it is a strange peculiarity of this chapter of our history that the policy of Sir Bartle Frere and the war in Zululand were condemned by no one more strongly than by the members of her Majesty's Government in England. The despatches sent out to Sir Bartle Frere were constantly despatches of remonstrance and complaint, even of condemnation. When Prince Louis Napoleon therefore thrust himself into this quarrel, he withdrew himself from any just claim to general sympathy. Regret for the sudden extinction of a young life of promise was but natural, and that regret was freely given; but the verdict of the public remained unaltered. He had thrown away his life uselessly in a quarrel which brought no honour, and for a motive which was not unselfish and was not exalted.

Cetewayo was captured and sent into imprisonment. His territory was divided amongst the leading native chiefs. A portion of it was given

to an Englishman, John Dunn, who had settled in the country very young, and who had become a sort of potentate among the Zulus. Secocoeni, another South African chief, was also conquered and captured; and order in a certain sense might be said to reign in South Africa once more. Nothing, however, that the Government had done was so unfortunate for them in popular estimation as the official sanction they were compelled to give to the policy of Sir Bartle Frere. The war, although it had ended in a practical success, was none the less regarded by the English public as a blunder and a disaster. The loss of English life had been terrible, and worse than the mere loss of life was the fact that lives had been thrown away to no purpose. Hardly in any part of the country or amongst any class of politicians was there the least sympathy felt with the policy which had made the war. Quiet lookers-on began to feel that now at last the Imperialistic principle had reached its anti-climax, that the Elizabethan revival was turned into a burlesque. Even the Afghan enterprise, objectionable though it was in almost every way, did not affect the popularity of the Government so much as the Zulu war. The plain common sense of England held that Sir Bartle Frere, however high and conscientious his motives may have been, was in the wrong from first to last, and that the cause of Cetewayo was on the whole a cause of fairness and of justice. The whole quarrel was so small, so miserable, that no pulse, even of Imperialistic veins, could stir with any exultation at the tidings of supposed success. It seemed ignoble work for English soldiers to be engaged in a war against a simple savage like the Zulu king. Nor did anyone feel the least assurance that a permanent peace had been obtained for Southern Africa, even at the cost of all this shame and blood. The Transvaal difficulty remained still unsettled. The native tribes might at any time or any chance coalesce in force sufficient to oppose us. We were threatened everywhere with fresh and useless responsibilities. We had now an African Question as well as an Eastern Question. Even the music-halls of London rang with no plaudits to songs in praise of the South African campaign. England had gone into war against her conscience; she came out of it not triumphant, but regretful and ashamed—a 'victor that hath lost in gain.' The attitude of the Government seemed one of mere penitence. Cetewayo in his prison looked a much more respectable figure for history than the Minister whose unfortunate task it was to defend the policy which he had never approved, but which he had not strength of mind enough firmly to resist at the beginning. On the Government fell the burden of Sir Bartle Frere's responsibilities, without Sir Bartle Frere's consoling and self-sufficing belief in the justice of his cause and the genuineness of his enterprise.

The distress in the country was growing deeper and deeper day by day. Some of the most important trades were suffering heavily. The winter of 1878 had been long and bitter, and there had been practically no summer. The manufacturing and mining districts almost everywhere over the country were borne down by the failure of business. The working classes were in genuine distress. In Ireland there was a forecast of something almost approaching to famine. When distress affects the trade and the population of a country, the first impulse is always to find fault with the reigning Government. Lord Beaconsfield's supporters many times asked in anger and scorn whether Her Majesty's ministers were responsible for the bad weather. The answer which most people gave either in words or in thought was sound in its general logic. Her Majesty's ministers, they said, are not responsible for the seasons, but they are responsible for a policy which adds to bad seasons the burden of unnecessary wars.

The authority of the Government in the House of Commons was greatly shaken. Sir Stafford Northcote had not the strength necessary to make a successful leader. Like most men who want natural firmness, he occasionally put forth little efforts of a sort of petulant determination. He generally tried to be strong where he should have been yielding, and was almost invariably compelled to be yielding where he ought to have been strong. The result was that the House of Commons was becoming demoralised. The Government brought in a scheme for university education in Ireland, which was nothing better than a mutilation of Mr. Gladstone's rejected bill. It was carried through both Houses in a few weeks, because the Government were anxious to do something which might have the appearance of conciliating the Irish people without going far enough in that direction to estrange their Conservative supporters. The measure thus devised had exactly the opposite effect from that which was intended. It estranged a good many Conservative supporters; it roused a new feeling of hostility amongst the Nonconformists, and it did not concede enough to the demands of the Irish Catholics to be of any use in the way of conciliation. It was plain that the mandate, to use a French phrase, of the Parliament was nearly out. The session of 1879 was its sixth session; it would only be possible to have one session more. Louder and louder grew the cry from the Liberal side for the Government at once to go to the country. An argument more ingenious than substantial was got up to show that a Government is bound to dissolve before the legal mandate of the Parliament has run out. Mr. Gladstone, in especial, endeavoured to prove that there ought always to be a kind of spare session left,—a reserve session, which the Government might use if they were driven by actual necessity, but which as a rule should not be turned to

any account. In other words, Mr. Gladstone contended that if seven years be the legal mandate of a Parliament, it should be an understood principle that a dissolution should not be put off longer than the close of the sixth session. There seems nothing particularly satisfactory in the argument. It is reasonable to contend that the term of seven years is too long for the duration of a Parliament. There is much to be said in favour of compelling members to meet their constituents more often than once in seven years. The fact is, that no Parliament ever does last seven years. It might be convenient and just to declare by legislation that its tenure shall be only for six, for five, or even for three years; but it certainly seems clear that, whatever be the legal term of a Parliament, it ought to be considered fairly within the right of a Government not to dissolve before the expiration of the full time if no occasion should arise to call for a prompter dissolution.

In this particular instance, however, the persistency with which the Government clung to their place began to look as if they were afraid to meet the challenge of the Liberals. The more they held back the more loudly and vehemently was the challenge repeated. Many Liberals who declared that all they wanted was to meet the Government at the hustings at once were probably in their hearts somewhat afraid of the result of the encounter. But as Mr. Gladstone had again and again challenged the Government to appeal to the country, all his followers, and some who would not have followed him if they could have helped it, were compelled to assume the appearance of an eagerness and courage equal to his, and to echo in notes as little faltering as they could make them his call of defiance to Lord Beaconsfield. Thus the winter passed on. Two or three elections which occurred meantime resulted in favour of the Conservatives. Constituencies became divided into unexpected sections or factions. In one remarkable case, that of the Southwark election, very little interest apparently was taken by the Liberals. The candidate they put forward was not a man to excite enthusiasm or even interest. The Conservative candidate, Mr. Clarke, was a man of ability, character, and influence, and the result was a remarkable victory for the Conservative side. About this time, then, there was a little renewal of confidence among the friends of Lord Beaconsfield, and a sudden sinking of the spirits among most of the Liberals. Parliament met in February, and the Government gave it to be understood that they intended to have what one of them called 'a fair working session.' Suddenly, however, they made up their minds that it would be convenient to accept Mr. Gladstone's challenge, and to dissolve in the Easter holidays. The dissolution took place on March 24, 1880, and the elections began

The result cannot be better described than in the words of Lord Beaconsfield himself, in the celebrated speech which depicted a sudden breakdown of the Liberal party in an attack upon Lord Derby's Government. We have quoted the words before in the place to which they properly belong, but they will bear repetition in their new application here. Only one word needs to be changed; we put in 'ministerial' where Lord Beaconsfield said 'opposition.' 'It was like a convulsion of nature rather than any ordinary transaction of human life. I can only liken it to one of those earthquakes which take place in Calabria or Peru. There was a rumbling murmur, a groan, a shriek, a sound of distant thunder. There was a rent, a fissure in the ground, and then a village disappeared; then a tall tower toppled down; and the whole of the ministerial benches became one great dissolving view of anarchy.' For with the very first day of the elections it was evident that the Conservative majority was already gone. Each succeeding day showed more and more the change that had taken place in public feeling. Defeat was turned into disaster. Disaster became utter rout and confusion. When the elections were over it was found that the Conservative party were nowhere. A majority of some hundred and twenty sent the Liberals back into power. No Liberal statesmen in our time ever before saw themselves sustained by such an army of followers. There was a moment or two of hesitation—of delay. The Queen sent for Lord Hartington, she then sent for Lord Granville; but everyone knew in advance who was to come into power at last. The strife lately carried on had been the old duel between two great men. Mr. Gladstone had stood up against Lord Beaconsfield for some years and fought him alone. He had dragged his party after him into many a danger. He had compelled them more than once to fight where many of them would fain have held back, and where none of them saw any chance of victory. Now, at last, the battle had been given to his hands, and it was a matter of necessity that the triumph should bring back to power the man whose energy and eloquence had inspired the struggle. The Queen sent for Mr. Gladstone, and a new chapter of English history opened, with the opening of which this work has to close.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE LITERATURE OF THE REIGN: SECOND SURVEY.

The later period which we have now to survey is more rich in scientific literature than that former period which we assumed to close with the

Crimean war. In practical science, as we have already shown, the advance made during the reign of Queen Victoria has been greater in many ways than the advance made from the beginning of civilisation to that time. Sir Robert Peel travelled from Rome to London to assume office as Prime Minister, exactly as Constantine travelled from York to Rome to become emperor. Each traveller had all that sails and horses could do for him, and no more. A few years later Peel might have reached London from Rome in some forty-eight hours. Something of the same kind may be said for economical, political, and what is now called social science. The whole of that system of legislative reform which is founded on a recognition of the principles of humanity may be said to belong to our own times. Our penal systems have undergone a thorough reform. More than once it seemed as if the reform were going too far, and as if the tenderness to criminals were likely to prove an encouragement to crime. But, although there have been for this reason little outbursts of reaction every now and then, the growth of the principle of humanity has been steady, and the principle has taken firm and fixed root in our systems of penal legislation. Flogging in the army and navy may be said to be now wholly abolished. The senseless and barbarous system of imprisonment for debt is abandoned. There is no more transportation of convicts. Care is taken of the lives and the health of women and children in all manner of employments. Schools are managed on systems of wise gentleness. Dotheboys Hall would be an impossible picture even for caricature in these later years. We are perhaps at the beginning of a movement of legislation which is about to try to the very utmost that right of state interference with individual action which at one time it was the object of most of our legislators to reduce to its very narrowest proportions. It may be that this straining of the right of the majority over the minority is destined to bring about in due course its reaction. But we do not think that 'the survival of the fittest,' the doctrine on which our forefathers acted more or less consciously in the education of children and the treatment of criminals, will ever again, within any time to which speculation can safely reach, be adopted as a principle of our legislation. Much of the healthier and more humane spirit prevailing in our social systems, in our criminal laws, in the management of our schools, in the care of the State for the working classes, for women, and for children, is undoubtedly due to the spread of that sound and practical scientific teaching which began to make it known everywhere that the recognition of the laws of health will always be found in the end to be a recognition of the laws of morality.

But, though the philosophy of these later days has proved itself thus essentially practical, it is to be observed that the great scientific contro-

versy of the time is distinctly and purely speculative. The Darwinian theory, as it is commonly, we will not say vulgarly, called, may be described as one of the most remarkable facts in the history of its time. Dr. Charles R. Darwin, grandson of the author of 'The Botanic Garden' and 'Zoonomia,' was born in 1809. He showed at an early age great capacity as a naturalist. He accompanied as naturalist the expedition of Her Majesty's ship 'Beagle' for the survey of South America and the circumnavigation of the globe. This expedition occupied him nearly five years, and he returned to England in 1836. He published several studies in geology and in fossil species, and seemed to have made his mark as a naturalist of distinction, and nothing more. Charles Knight's 'English Cyclopædia,' published in 1855, twenty years after the return of Dr. Darwin from his great voyage, speaks in high terms of his contributions to the sciences he studied, and adds: 'Mr. Darwin is still in the prime of life, and may therefore be expected to contribute largely to the extension of the sciences he has so successfully cultivated.' If Mr. Darwin had died soon after that time the world would never have suspected that it had lost anything more than a highly promising naturalist. In 1859 appeared 'The Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection; or, the Preservation of the Favoured Races in the Struggle of Life.' The book had hardly been published when it was found that a great crisis had been reached in the history of science and of thought. The importance of Darwin's 'Origin of Species,' regarded as a mere historical fact, is of at least as much importance to the world as Comte's publication of his theory of historical development. In these pages we are considering Darwin's theory and his work merely as historical facts. We are dealing with them as we might deal with the fall of a dynasty or the birth of a new State. The controversy which broke out when the 'Origin of Species' was published has been going on ever since without the slightest sign of diminishing ardour. It spread almost through all society. It was heard from the pulpit and from the platform; it raged in the scientific and unscientific magazines. It was trumpeted in the newspapers; it made one of the stock subjects of talk in the dining-room and the smoking-room; it tittered over the tea table. Mr. Darwin's central idea was that the various species of plants and animals, instead of being each specially created and immutable, are continually undergoing modification and change through a process of adaptation, by virtue of which such varieties of the species as are in any way better fitted for the rough work of the struggle for existence are enabled to survive and multiply at the expense of the others. Mr. Darwin considers this principle, with indeed some other and less important causes, capable of explaining the manner in which all existing types

may have descended from one or a very few low forms of life. All animals, beasts, birds, reptiles, insects have descended, he contends, from a very limited number of progenitors, and he holds that analogy points to the belief that all animals and plants whatever have descended from one common prototype. The idea that man gradually developed from some very low prototype was, of course, not Dr. Darwin's especially, nor belonging even to Dr. Darwin's time. It was an idea that had been floating about the world almost at all times. It had become somewhat fashionable in England not long before Dr. Darwin published his 'Origin of Species.' It was led up to in the 'Vestiges of Creation,' a book that once caused much stir in scientific and religious circles. A strong-minded lady in Lord Beaconsfield's 'Tancred' bewilders and saddens the young hero by gravely informing him that we once were fishes, and shall probably in the end be crows. But Darwin's book, if we take it as resting for its central point of doctrine upon that principle of the survival of the fittest, was the first great systematised attempt to give the theory a solid place among the scientific opinions of the world. It was worked out with the most minute and elaborate care, and with an inexhaustible patience—qualities which we do not expect to find in the originators of new and startling theories. Dr. Darwin's work was fiercely assailed and passionately championed. It was not the scientific principle which inflamed so much commotion; it was the supposed bearing of the doctrines on revealed religion. Injustice was done to the calm examination of Darwin's theory on both sides of the controversy. Many who really had not yet given themselves time even to consider its arguments cried out in admiration of the book, merely because they assumed that it was destined to deal a blow to the faith in revealed religion. On the other side many of the believers in revealed religion were much too easily alarmed and too sensitive. Many of them did not pause to ask themselves whether, if every article of the doctrine were proved to be scientifically true, it would affect in the slightest degree the basis of their religious faith. To this writer it seems clear that Dr. Darwin's theory might be accepted by the most orthodox believer without the firmness of his faith moulting a feather. The theory is one altogether as to the process of growth and construction in the universe, and, whether accurate or inaccurate, does not seem in any wise to touch the question which is concerned with the sources of all life, movement, and being. However that may be, it is certain that the book made an era not only in science, but in scientific controversy, and not merely in scientific controversy, but in controversy expanding into all circles and amongst all intelligences. The scholar and the fribble, the divine and the school girl, still talk and argue and wrangle over Darwin and the origin of species.

Professor Huxley is one of the most distinguished and thorough-going supporters of Mr. Darwin's principle. Professor Huxley advocates, in his own words, 'the hypothesis which supposes that species living at any time must be the result of a gradual modification of pre-existing species.' He maintains that to suppose each species of plant or animal to have been formed and placed on the globe at long intervals by a distinct act of creative power is an assumption 'as unsupported by tradition or revelation as it is opposed to the general analogy of nature.' Professor Huxley would have been a distinguished scientific man if he had never taken any part in the Darwin controversy. He would have been a distinguished scientific man even if he had not been, as he is, a great thinker and writer. In the arena of public controversy he has long been a familiar and formidable figure. He came into the field at first almost unknown, like the Disinherited Knight in Scott's romance; and while the good-natured spectators were urging him to turn the blunt end of the lance against the shield of the least formidable opponent, he dashed with splendid recklessness and with spearpoint forward against the buckler of Richard Owen himself, then the most renowned of England's living naturalists. Professor Huxley has a happy gift of shrewd sense and sarcasm combined. Few men can expose a sophism so effectively in a single sentence of exhaustive satire. It would be wrong to regard him merely as a scientific man. He is a literary man as well. What he writes would be worth reading for its form and its expression alone, were it of no scientific authority. He has a fascinating style, and a happy way of pressing into the service of strictly scientific exposition some illustration caught from literature and art, even from popular and light literature. Mr. Huxley seemed from the first to understand that a scientific school can never become really powerful while it is content with the ear of strictly scientific men. He cultivated, therefore, sedulously and successfully the literary art of expression. His style as a lecturer has a special charm. It is free from any effort at rhetorical eloquence; but it has all the eloquence which is born of the union of deep thought with simple expression and luminous diction. There is not much of the poetic about Mr. Huxley's style; but the occasional vividness of his illustrations suggests the existence of some of the higher imaginative qualities. There was something like a gleam of the poetic in the half melancholy, half humorous introduction of Balzac's famous 'Peau de Chagrin' into the well-known protoplasm lecture. But as a rule Mr. Huxley treads only the firm earth and deliberately, perhaps scornfully, rejects any aspirings after the clouds.

Professor Tyndall, another great teacher in the same school, has, like

Mr. Huxley, the gift of literary expression, informed perhaps by more of the imaginative and the poetic. Mr. Tyndall has done perhaps more practical work in science than Mr. Huxley. He has written more; he has sometimes written more eloquently. But there is a certain coarseness of materialism about Mr. Tyndall's views with regard to man and nature. There is a vehement aggressiveness in him which must interfere with the clearness of his views. He has occasionally assailed the orthodox with the polemical intemperance of a field-preacher. He has more than once been carried clear away from his purpose by the unsparing vigour of his controversial style. He is sometimes one of the most impatient of sages, the most intolerant of philosophers. His temper as a controversialist may have tended sometimes to weaken his scientific authority, but of course this only happens where the subject engrossing Professor Tyndall's attention is one of that class which have in all ages proved too exciting now and then for the cool judgment even of philosophers. Mr. Tyndall has made noble contributions to scientific literature which concern in no wise the tremendous questions put by Mr. Carlyle with such solemnity and such emotion—'Whence, and, oh Heavens! whither?'

Mr. Herbert Spencer may be said to have taken the sphere of the naturalist and the spheres of the metaphysician and the psychologist, and drawn a circle round embracing and enfolding them all and adopting them as his province. If Mr. Darwin's attempt to map out the process by which vegetable and animal life are gradually constructed was an ambitious effort, the task which Mr. Herbert Spencer undertook was of still more vast and venturous scope. Mr. Spencer is the author of a series of connected philosophical works intended to reduce to harmonious and scientific order the principles of biology, psychology, sociology, and morality. He has applied universally and carried out in systematic detail the doctrine of evolution or development. In 1855 appeared his 'Principles of Psychology,' an attempt to analyse the relations between the order of the worlds of matter and of mind. The central and governing idea of this work is that the universal law of intelligence flows directly from the co-operation of mind and nature, in the creation of our ideas. As there is a persistency in the order of events in nature, so will there be a persistency in the connection between the corresponding states of consciousness. The succession or co-existence of external phenomena produces a like succession in our mental perceptions, and when any two psychical states often occur together, there is at length established an internal tendency for those states always to recur in the same order. Starting from the law which has been thus described in words that are not ours, Mr. Spencer traces the growth of human intelligence from the lower phenomena of reflex action and

instinct, and then shows how our unconscious life merges in a succession of conscious phenomena; and lastly he endeavours to carry us upwards from the origin of memory to the highest exercise of reason and the scientific development of the moral feelings. In other words, Mr. Spencer endeavours to lay down the principles of development for the whole world of matter, of mind, and of morals. Mr. Spencer has written essays on education, on the government of States, and on other subjects, which however scarcely seem to be marked by the precision of thought which distinguishes him as a psychological writer. His views of education and of civic government seem occasionally to degenerate almost to the degree of crotchets. His style is not fascinating. It is clear, strong, and simple, but it has little literary beauty, and borrows little from illustration of any kind. Mr. Spencer himself utterly undervalues what he regards as superfluous words. Attractiveness of style is part of the instrumentality by which a great writer or speaker accomplishes his ends. If a man would convince he must not disdain the arts by which people can be induced to listen. Much of Mr. Spencer's greatest work had long been little better than a calling aloud to solitude for the lack of the attractiveness of style which he despises, but which Plato or Aristotle would not have despised. Mr. Spencer, however, rather prides himself on not caring much about the Greeks and their literature. A great thinker he undoubtedly is; one of the greatest thinkers of modern time; perhaps a man to be classed among the few great and original philosophers of all time. It is only of late years that his fame has begun to spread among his own countrymen. Gradually it has become known to the English public in general that there was among them a great lonely thinker, surveying the problems of mind and matter as from some high serene watch-tower. His works were well known among reading people in the United States long before they had ceased to be the exclusive property of a very select few in England. Of late he has come to be in a certain sense the fashion in this country among people who desire to be thought clever. It is not any part of our purpose to raise the question whether less honour is done to a great writer by neglecting him altogether, or by adopting him as one of the authors whom it is conventionally proper to have read, and with whom therefore everybody is bound to affect an acquaintance. It certainly was not for that that Mr. Spencer toiled his way over the rugged unpitying Alpine heights of thought '*ut pueris*—we may add, *puellisque—placeat et declamatio fiat.*'

The name of Professor Max Müller is now by common consent enrolled with the names of famous Englishmen. Max Müller has adopted England as his home, and England has quietly annexed his reputation.

He has approached the history of man's development by the study of man's speech. He has opened a new and a most important road for the student. In his hands philology ceases to be a dry science of words, and becomes quickened into a living teacher of history. Max Müller has contributed to various departments of thought, and has proved himself a charming writer, who can invest even the least attractive subject with an absorbing interest.

Metaphysical and psychological science have lately lost a pupil of marvellous versatility in George Henry Lewes. No literary man in our time did so many different things and did them so well as Mr. Lewes. He wrote novels; he made some of the most successful adaptations from the French theatre known to our stage; he was an accomplished literary and dramatic critic; he translated Spinoza; he wrote the lives of Goethe and of Robespierre; he produced a history of philosophy in which he had something of his own to say about every great philosopher from Thales down to Schelling and Comte; he was the author of all manner of physiological essays; his 'Problems of Life and Mind' and his 'Physical Basis of Mind' were really contributions of permanent value to the studies with which they so boldly dealt. It is not perhaps unworthy of notice that Mr. Lewes was even a remarkably good amateur actor. It seems as if he must be able to do everything well to which it pleased him to put his hand. His peculiar merit was not, however, that he could write clever books on a great variety of subjects. London has many hack writers who could go to work at any publisher's order, and produce successively an epic poem, a novel, a treatise on the philosophy of the conditioned, a handbook of astronomy, a farce, a life of Julius Cæsar, an account of African explorations, and a volume of sermons. But none of these productions would have one gleam of native and genuine vitality about it. The moment it had served its purpose in the literary market it would go dead down to the dead. Lewes' works are of quite a different style. They have positive merit and value of their own, and they live. It was a characteristically audacious thing to attempt to cram the history of philosophy into a couple of medium-sized volumes, polishing off each philosopher in a few pages, draining him, plucking out the heart of his mystery and his system, and stowing him away in the glass jar designed to exhibit him to an edified class of students. But it must be admitted that the 'History of Philosophy' is a genuine and a valuable study, although the author, not then in the calmer maturity of his powers, crumples up the whole science of metaphysics, sweeps away transcendental philosophy, and demolishes *à priori* reasoning in a manner which strongly reminds one of Arthur Pendennis upsetting, in a dashing criticism and on the faith of an hour's

reading in an encyclopædia, some great scientific theory of which he had never heard before, and the development of which had been the life's labour of a sage.

The period which we are surveying was especially rich in historical studies. It was prolific, not only in historians and histories, but even in new ways of studying history. The Crimean war was still going on when Mr. Froude's 'History of England from the fall of Wolsey to the death of Elizabeth' began to make its appearance; and the public soon became alive to the fact that a man of great and original power had come into literature. The first volume of Mr. Buckle's 'History of Civilisation' was published in 1857. Mr. Freeman literally disentombed a great part of the early history of England; cleared it of the accumulated dust of traditional error and ignorance, and for the first time showed it to us as it must have presented itself to the eyes of those who helped to make it. Mr. Kinglake began the story of the Crimean war. Mr. Lecky occupied himself with 'The History of Rationalism in Europe,' 'The History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne,' and more lately with the great days of the eighteenth century. Canon Stubbs made the 'Constitutional History of England' his province; and Mr. Green undertook to compress the whole sequence of English history into a sort of literary outline map in which events stood clearly out in the just perspective and proportions of their real importance. Of the men we have named, it would not be unreasonable to say that Mr. Froude and Mr. Kinglake belong to the romantic school of historian; Mr. Buckle and Mr. Lecky to the philosophic; Mr. Freeman, Canon Stubbs, and Mr. Green to the practical and the real. To show events and people as they were, is the clear aim of this latter school; to picture them dramatically and vividly would seem to be the ambition of Mr. Froude and Mr. Kinglake. To show that they have a system and a sequence, and are evidence of great natural laws, is the object of men like Mr. Buckle and Mr. Lecky. Mr. Froude is probably the most popular historian since Macaulay, although his popularity is far indeed from that of Macaulay. He is widely read where Mr. Freeman would seem intolerably learned and pedantic, and Mr. Lecky too philosophic to be lively. His books have been the subject of the keenest controversy. His picture of Henry VIII. set all the world wondering. It set an example and became a precedent. It founded a new school in history and biography; what we may call the paradoxical school; the school which sets itself to discover that some great man had all the qualities for which the world had never before given him credit, and none of those which it had always been content to recognise as his undoubted possession. The virtues of the misprized Tiberius; the purity and meek-

ness of Lucrezia Borgia; the disinterestedness and forbearance of Charles of Burgundy, these and other such historical discoveries naturally followed Mr. Froude's illustration of the domestic virtues, the exalted chastity, and the merciful disposition of Henry VIII. Mr. Froude has, however, qualities which raise him high above the level of the ordinary paradoxical historian. He has a genuine creative power. We may refuse to believe that his Henry VIII. is the Henry of history, but we cannot deny that Mr. Froude makes us see his Henry as vividly as if he stood in life before us. A dangerous gift for a historian; but it helps to make a great literary man. Mr. Froude may claim to be regarded as a great literary man, measured by the standard of our time. He has imagination; he has that sympathetic and dramatic instinct which enables a man to enter into the emotions and motives, the likings and dislikings, of people of a past age. His style is penetrating and thrilling; his language often rises to the dignity of a poetic eloquence. The figures he conjures up are always the semblances of real men and women. They are never wax-work, or lay figures, or skeletons clothed in words, or purple rags of description stuffed out with straw into an awkward likeness of the human form. The one distinct impression we carry away from Mr. Froude's history is that of the living reality of his figures. In Marlowe's 'Faustus,' the Doctor conjures up for the amusement of the Emperor a procession of beautiful and stately shadows to represent the great ones of the past. When the apparitions of Alexander the Great and his favourite pass by, the Emperor can hardly restrain himself from rushing to clasp the hero in his arms, and has to be reminded by the wizard that 'these are but shadows, not substantial.' Even then the Emperor can hardly get over his impression of their reality; for he cries:—

> I have heard it said
> That this fair lady, whilst she lived on earth,
> Had on her neck a little wart or mole;

and, lo! there is the mark on the neck of the beautiful form which floats across his field of vision. Mr. Froude's shadows are like this; so deceptive, so seemingly vital and real; with the beauty and the blot alike conspicuous; with the pride and passion of the hero and the heroine's white neck and the wart on it. Mr. Froude's whole soul, in fact, is in the human beings whom he meets as he unfolds his narrative. He is a romantic or heroic portrait painter. He has painted some pictures which may almost compare with those of Titian. Their glances follow and haunt one like the wonderful eyes of Cæsar Borgia, or the soul-piercing resignation of that face on Guido's canvas once believed to be that of Beatrice Cenci. But Mr. Froude wants the one indispensable quality of the true

historian, accuracy. He wants altogether the cold, patient, stern quality which clings to facts; the scientific faculty. His narrative never stands out in that 'dry light' which Bacon so commends; the light of undistorted and clear truth. The temptations to a man with a gift of heroic portrait-painting are too great for Mr. Froude. His genius carries him away and becomes his master. When Titian was painting his Cæsar Borgia, is it not conceivable that his imagination may have been positively inflamed by the contrast between the man's physical beauty and moral guilt, and have unconsciously heightened the contrast by making the pride and passion lour more darkly, the superb brilliancy of the eyes burn more radiantly, than might have been seen in real life? Mr. Froude has evidently been often thus ensnared by his own special gift. There is hardly anything in our modern literature more powerful, picturesque, and dramatic than his portrait of Mary Queen of Scots. It stands out and glows and darkens with all the glare and gloom of a living form, now in sun and now in shadow. It is almost as perfect and impressive as Titian. But no reasonable person can doubt that it is a dramatic and not an historical study. Without going into any controversy as to disputed facts, even admitting for the sake of argument that Mary was as guilty as Mr. Froude would make her, it is impossible to believe that the woman he has painted is the Mary Stuart of history and of life. No doubt his Mary is now a reality for us. We are distinctly acquainted with her; we can see her and follow her movements. But she is a fable for all that. The poets and painters have made the form of the mermaid not one whit less clear and distinct for us than the figure of a living woman. If any of us were to see a painting of a mermaid with scales upon her neck, or with feet, he would resent it or laugh at it as an inaccuracy, just as if he saw some gross anatomical blunder in a picture of a man or woman. Mr. Froude has created a Mary Stuart as art and legend have created a mermaid. He has made her one of the most imposing figures in our modern literature, to which indeed she is an important addition. His Queen Elizabeth is almost equally remarkable as a work of art. His Henry VIII. stands not quite so high, and far lower comes his Cæsar, which is absurdly untrue as a portrait, and is not strong even as a romantic picture. Mr. Froude's personal integrity and candour are constantly coming into contradiction with his artistic temptation; but the portrait goes on all the same. He is too honest and candid to conceal or pervert any fact that he knows. He tells everything frankly, but continues his picture in his own way. It may be that some rather darksome vices suddenly prove their existence in the character of the person whom Mr. Froude had chosen to illustrate the brightness and glory of human nature. Mr. Froude is not abashed. He

deliberately states the facts; shows how, in this or that instance, truth did tell shocking lies, mercy ordered several massacres, and virtue fell into the ways of Messalina. But he still maintains that his pictures are portraits of truth, mercy, and virtue. A lover of art, according to a story in the memoirs of Canova, was so struck with admiration of that sculptor's Venus that he begged to be allowed to see the model. The artist gratified him; but, so far from beholding a very goddess of beauty in the flesh, he only saw a well-made, rather coarse-looking woman. The sculptor, seeing his disappointment, explained to him that the hand and the eye of the artist, as they work, can gradually and almost imperceptibly change the model from that which it is in the flesh to that which it ought to be in the marble. This is the process which is always going on with Mr. Froude whenever he is at work upon some model in which for love or hate he takes unusual interest. Therefore the historian is constantly involving himself in a welter of inconsistencies and errors. Mr. Froude's errors go far to justify the dull and literal old historians of the school of Dryasdust, who, if they never quickened an event into life, never, on the other hand, deluded the mind with phantoms. The chroniclers of mere facts and dates, the old almanac-makers, are weary creatures; but one finds it hard to condemn them to mere contempt when he sees how the vivid genius of a man like Mr. Froude can lead him astray. Mr. Froude's finest artistic gift becomes his greatest defect for the special work he undertakes to do. A scholar, a man of high imagination, a man likewise of patient labour, he is above all things a romantic portrait-painter; and the spell by which his works allure us is the spell of the magician, not the calm power of the teacher.

Mr. Buckle's 'History of Civilisation in England' created a sensation hardly less than that produced by Mr. Darwin's 'Origin of Species.' Indeed, for a time the interest it created was keener and more widely diffused. Mr. Buckle undertook to prove four great principles, which he contended were essential to the understanding of history. First, that the progress of nations depends upon the success with which the laws of phenomena are investigated, and the extent to which a knowledge of these laws is diffused. Second, that before any such investigation can proceed a spirit of scepticism must arise 'which, at first aiding the investigation, is afterwards aided by it.' Third, that the results of this investigation tend to increase the influence of intellectual truths, and to diminish not absolutely, but relatively, the influence of moral truths, which latter are more stationary than intellectual truths, and receive fewer additions. Fourth, that the great enemy of this progressive investigation, and consequently of human civilisation, is the protective spirit in which Govern-

ments undertake to watch over men and direct them what to do, and in which churches and teachers prescribe for them what they are to believe. Now it is plain that on the decision of the first point rested the whole issue between Mr. Buckle and his opponents. If the progress of civilisation depended upon the discovery and right appreciation of phenomena, then the basis of the science of history would be settled beyond dispute. History would then take its ordered place like any of the physical sciences. But it was on this very first point that the struggle had to be made in which, as it seems to us, Mr. Buckle's endeavour broke down. He laboured to establish nothing less than the fact that all the movements of history, and indeed of human life through all its processes, are regulated by fixed physical laws as certain as those which rule the motions of the waves and the changes of the weather, and of which we could arrive at a sound and trustworthy knowledge if we were content to study their phenomena as we do the phenomena of the sea and the skies. Of course this was not an idea which occurred for the first time to Mr. Buckle. It is an idea which has always been more or less clearly in the minds of some men. It belongs to that principle which Comte laid down, when he endeavoured to explain the development of human history. It was more than once put into the form of a principle by Goethe, and had been described more distinctly still by Lessing. But men like Goethe and Lessing suggested it rather as a probability than endeavoured to define it as an actual law. Mr. Buckle set about establishing it as the law of human life by illustration, argument, and evidence drawn from the actual facts of history and of nature. He brought to his task a vast amount of more or less arranged information, an ardent spirit full of faith in his own theory, and a power of self-will and self-complacency which enabled him to accept as certain and settled every dogma on which he had personally made up his mind. The 'History of Civilisation' was never finished. The author's early death brought the task to a close. It remains a great effort, a monument of courage, energy, and labour; perhaps, indeed, it might not inaptly be described as a ruin. Mr. Buckle had attempted a task beyond the compass of one man's capacity and of men's combined knowledge thus far. He tried to build a literary Tower of Babel, by means of which man might reach the skies and look down complacently on the mechanical movements of planets, races, and generations beneath. He died at the age of forty, lamenting almost with his latest breath that he had to leave his work unfinished, and still believing that life, mere life, was all he needed to make it complete.

Mr. Kinglake's still unfinished history of the Crimean war is full of brilliant description and of keen, penetrating thought. It shows many

gleams of the poetic, and it has some of the brightest and bitterest satirical passages in the literature of our time. The chapters in which Mr. Kinglake goes out of his way to describe the career, the character, and the companions of the Emperor Napoleon III. cut like corrosive acid. Mr. Kinglake found his mind filled with detestation of Louis Napoleon and his companions. He invented for himself the theory that the Crimean war arose only out of Louis Napoleon's peculiar position, and his anxiety to become recognised among the great sovereigns of Europe. The invention of this theory gave him an excuse for lavishing so much labour of love and hate on chapters which must always remain a masterpiece of remorseless satire. They hardly pretend to be always just in their estimate of men, but no one rates them according to their justice or their injustice. They are read for their style, and nothing more. Perhaps it would not be altogether unjust to say much the same of the history as far as it has gone. It is brilliant; it is powerful; it is full of thrilling passages; but it remains after all the historical romance rather than history. Moreover, it is a good deal too long. The Crimean war came after a generation of peace, and to many Englishmen it almost seemed as if there never had been such a war before or would be again. Mr. Kinglake set about his great book with something like the same estimate of the historical importance and proportions of the war. Even already the perspective of events is beginning to come fairly out, and it seems as if the Crimean campaign hardly needed the huge historical monument at which Mr. Kinglake is still at work.

Mr. Lecky has probably more of the philosophic mind than any of his contemporaries. He has treated history on a large scale and in the philosophical spirit. He has taken a wide and liberal survey of the progress of thought and of morals as a whole, and then has brought the knowledge and observation thus acquired to the practical purpose of illustrating certain passages of history and periods of human development. His 'History of England in the Eighteenth Century' is not more remarkable thus far for the closeness and fulness of its details than for its breadth of view and its calmness of judgment. Mr. Lecky is always the historian and never the partisan. His works grow on the reader. They do not turn upon him all at once a sudden glare like the flash of a revolving light, but they fill the mind gradually with a sense of their justice, their philosophic thought, and the clear calmness of their historical observation.

Dean Stanley, the pupil and the biographer of Dr. Arnold, has made some of the most valuable contributions to ecclesiastical history which our time possesses. His 'Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey' fascinates the reader by its beauty of style and by the evidences of the loving

care with which the author has approached his subject. Mr. John Morley has produced monographs of Burke, of Rousseau, and of Voltaire which are original in their very form, and which have made a distinct mark on the literature of their day. There are many essayists in history, biography, and the criticism of art and letters who well deserved to be named in a survey of the literature of our time, but whom we are compelled to pass over. Space would hardly allow of our even classing them in schools, as, for example, the Positivists, the Neo-Pagans, the Æsthetics, the Agnostics, the Satirists, and all the rest. In an age of prodigious literary activity the essayists of various schools have certainly not been the least active and productive.

The poets, however, outnumber them by far. We have had no great poet in these later days, but the number of our singers is prodigious. A great meeting of poets could be got up in London alone. Many really fine poems are the almost unnoticed result of this multitudinous labour. Sir Walter Scott once said with good-humoured modesty that he had taught many ladies and gentlemen to write romances as well or nearly as well as he could himself. Of the poetic voices which literally fill the air around us, the majority must be those of mere mocking-birds, and yet it is not always easy to distinguish between the original notes and the imitation. The highest reach attained among the poets of this later day is assuredly that of Mr. Swinburne. His first volume of poems, containing 'The Queen Mother' and 'Rosamond,' published in 1861, made no mark whatever, but his 'Atalanta in Calydon,' which appeared in 1865, startled the world. The mere boldness of the return to the subjects and the very forms of Greek drama would have commanded attention; but there was something much more commanding in the genuine originality with which the poet breathed new life into the antique forms. Mr. Swinburne's mastery of melodious phrase and verse astonished even the age acquainted with the musical richness and softness of Tennyson's lines, and Mr. Swinburne had a vibrating strength in his verse such as the Poet Laureate never tried to have. Mr. Swinburne decidedly shot an arrow higher into the air than any of his fellows in these later days, but he only shot one arrow. To vary the illustration, we may say that the jet from his poetic source soared higher than that of any of his rivals; but it was only one thin, narrow stream, and not a full fountain sending its spray and its waters broadly in the sun. His poetic ideas are very few. Even his vocabulary is not liberal. Words as well as ideas are soon exhausted. Even the greatest admirer becomes conscious of a sense of monotony as he listens again and again to the same cry of rebellion against established usage, the same hysterical appeal to lawlessness in passion and in art, poured forth in

the same phraseology and with the same alliteration. Mr. Morris, the author of 'Jason' and the 'Earthly Paradise,' is a poet of a milder and a purer strain. Nothing can be more beautiful, tender and melancholy than some of his sweet, pathetic stories. Mr. Morris has been compared to Chaucer, but he is at the best a Chaucer without strength and without humour. He has such story-teller's power as one might suppose suited to absorb the evening hours of some lady of mediæval days. She would have loved Mr. Morris's beautiful tales of love and truth and constancy and separation, tales which, to quote the poet's own words, 'would make her sweet eyes wet, at least sometimes, at least when heaven and earth on some fair eve had grown too fair for mirth.' But the broad strength of Chaucer, the animal spirits, the ringing laughter, the occasional fierceness of emotion, the pain, and the passion are not to be found in Mr. Morris's exquisite and gentle verse. Mr. Dante G. Rossetti has written some sonnets which are probably entitled to rank with the best of their kind at any time, and one or two ballads of fierce, impassioned style, which seem as if they came straight from the heart of the old northern ballad world. Miss Christina Rossetti's 'Goblin Market' is almost perfect in its way. Miss Jean Ingelow has written some tender and pathetic poems. Mr. Aubrey de Vere is a true poet, and one of a family of poets. Mr. Robert Buchanan at one time gave promise of taking a high rank among modern poets. Assuredly he has not fulfilled all the hopes of his first days, but he must always stand well among the singers who only claim to form the second order of the poets of our time. 'The Spanish Gipsy,' and other productions in verse, by the novelist George Eliot, are the clever attempts of a woman of genius who is not a poet to write poetry. The poetry of these days may boast of having produced a distinct school, which has contrived to inoculate not only literature but art, architecture, ornament, dress, and social life generally with its influence. It is possible that long after the world may have ceased to read even the best writers of the school, the school itself will live curiously in memory, with its mannerisms, its affectations, its absurdities, imitations, and quackeries, and at the same time with its genuine beauty and high spiritual aspirations. The *précieuses*, it is to be remembered, were not always ridiculous. They were not ridiculous at all to begin with. They were ladies of intellect and true artistic feeling. It was only when imitation and insincerity set in, when sentiment took the place of emotion, when mannerism tried to pass itself off as originality, that the heroines of Molière's immortal comedy could have been lifelike figures even in caricature. So it is with the Pre-Raphaelite school, as a certain group of poets and painters came to be fantastically designated. Pre-Raphaelitism was in

the beginning a vigorous protest in favour of truth in nature and art, of open eyes and faithful observation in artistic critics, students, and everyone else, as against conventionalities and prettinesses and unrealities of all kinds. Mr. Ruskin was the prophet of the new school. Mr. Dante Rossetti, Mr. Holman Hunt, Mr. Madox Brown, and Mr. Millais were its practical expounders in art. A great controversy sprang up, and England divided itself into two schools. No impartial person can deny that Mr. Ruskin and the pre-Raphaelites did great good, and that much of their influence and example was decidedly healthy. But pre-Raphaelitism became a very different thing in later years, when it professed to invade all arts, and to establish itself in all the decorative business of life from the ornamentation of a cathedral to the fringe of a dress. Lately it has become a mere affectation, an artistic whim. It has got mixed up with æstheticism, neo-paganism, and other such fantasies. The typical pre-Raphaelite of the school's later development is, however, a figure not unworthy of description. The typical pre-Raphaelite believed Mr. Dante Rossetti and Mr. Burne Jones to be the greatest artists of the ancient or modern world. If any spoke to him of contemporary English poetry, he assumed that there was only question of Mr. Rossetti, Mr. Swinburne, or Mr. Morris. In modern French literature he admired Victor Hugo, Baudelaire, and one or two others newer to song, and of whom the outer world had yet heard little. Among the writers of older France he was chiefly concerned about François Villon. He was an enthusiastic admirer of the paintings of the late Henri Regnault. Probably he spoke of France as 'our France.' He was angry with the Germans for having vexed our France. He professed faith in the philosophy of Schopenhauer and the music of Wagner, and he was greatly touched by Chopin. He gave himself out as familiar with the Greek poets, and was wild in his admiration of Sappho. He made for himself a sort of religion out of wall-paper, old tea-pots and fans. He thought to order, and yet above all things piqued himself on his originality. He and his comrades received their opinions as Charlemagne's converts did their Christianity, in platoons. He became quite a distinct figure in the literary history of our time, and he positively called into existence a whole school of satirists in fiction, verse, and drawing to make fun of his follies, whimsicalities, and affectations.

The fiction of this second period has one really great name, and one only. The author of 'Adam Bede' and 'The Mill on the Floss' stands on a literary level with Dickens and Thackeray and Charlotte Brontë. 'George Eliot,' as this author chooses to call herself, is undoubtedly a great writer, merely as a writer. Her literary career began as a translator and an essayist. Her tastes seemed then to lead her wholly into the some-

what barren fields where German metaphysics endeavour to come to the relief or the confusion of German theology. She became a contributor to the *Westminster Review*; then she became its assistant editor, and worked assiduously for it under the direction of Dr. John Chapman, the editor. She had mastered many sciences as well as literatures. Probably no other novel-writer, since novel-writing became a business, ever possessed anything like her scientific knowledge. Unfortunately, her scientific knowledge 'o'er informed' her later novels, and made them oppressive to readers who longed for the early freshness of 'Adam Bede.' George Eliot does not seem to have found out, until she had passed what is conventionally regarded as the age of romance, that she had in her, high above all other gifts, the faculty of the novelist. When an author who is not very young makes a great hit at last, we soon begin to learn that he had already made many attempts in the same direction, and his publishers find an eager demand for the stories and sketches which, when they first appeared, utterly failed to attract attention. But it does not seem that Miss Marian Evans, as she then was, ever published anything in the way of fiction previous to the series of sketches which appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' and were called 'Scenes of Clerical Life.' These sketches attracted considerable attention, and were much admired; but not many people probably saw in them the capacity which produced 'Adam Bede' and 'Romola.' With the publication of 'Adam Bede' came a complete triumph. The author was elevated at once and by acclamation to the highest rank among living novelists. In one of the first numbers of the 'Cornhill Magazine' Thackeray, in a gossiping paragraph about novelists of the day, whom he mentioned alphabetically and by their initials, spoke of 'E' as a 'star of the first magnitude just risen on the horizon.' Nothing is much rarer than the union of the scientific and the literary or artistic temperaments. So rare is it that the exceptional, the almost solitary instance of Goethe comes up at once, distinct and striking to the mind. English novelists are even less likely to have anything of a scientific taste than French or German. Dickens knew nothing of science, and had, indeed, as little knowledge of any kind, save that which is derived from observation, as any respectable Englishman could well have. Thackeray was a man of varied reading, versed in the lighter literature of several languages, and strongly imbued with artistic tastes; but he had no care for science, and knew of it only what everyone has to learn at school. Lord Lytton's science was a mere sham. Charlotte Brontë was genius and ignorance. George Eliot is genius and culture. Had she never written a page of fiction, she must have been regarded with admiration by all who knew her as a woman of deep thought and of a varied knowledge such

as men complacently believe to be the possession only of men. It was not this, however, which made her a great novelist. Her eyes were not turned inwards or kept down in metaphysical contemplation. She studied the living world around her. She had an eye for external things keen almost as that of Dickens or Balzac. George Eliot is the only novelist who can paint such English people as the Poysers and the Tullivers just as they are. She looks into the very souls of such people. She tracks out their slow peculiar mental processes; she reproduces them fresh and firm from very life. Mere realism, mere photographing, even from the life, is not in art a great triumph. But George Eliot can make her dullest people interesting and dramatically effective. She can paint two dull people with quite different ways of dulness—a dull man and a dull woman, for example—and the reader is astonished to find how utterly distinct the two kinds of stupidity are, and how intensely amusing both can be made. There are two pedantic, pompous, dull advocates in Mr. Browning's 'The Ring and the Book.' How distinct they are; how different, how unlike, and how true are the two portraits! But then it must be owned that the poet sometimes allows his pedants to be as tiresome as they would be in real life, if each successively held a weary listener by the button. George Eliot is not guilty of any such artistic fault. No one wants to be rid of Mrs. Poyser, or Aunt Glegg, or the prattling Florentines in 'Romola.' There never was or could be a Mark Tapley or a Sam Weller. We put up with these impossibilities and delight in them, because they are so amusing and so full of fantastic humour. But Mrs. Poyser lives, and everyone knows an Aunt Gregg, and poor Mrs. Tulliver's cares and hopes and little fears and pitiful reasonings are animating hundreds of Mrs. Tullivers all over England. George Eliot has infused into the novel some elements it never had before; and so thoroughly infused them, that they blend with all the other materials, and do not form anywhere a solid lump or mass distinguishable from the rest. There are philosophical novels—'Wilhelm Meister' for example—which are weighed down and loaded with philosophy, and which the world only admires in spite of the philosophy. There are political novels—Lord Beaconsfield's for instance—which are only intelligible to those who make politics and political personalities a study, and which viewed merely as stories would not be worth speaking about. There are novels with a great direct purpose in them, such as 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' or 'Bleak House,' or Mr. Charles Reade's 'Hard Cash.' But these, after all, are only magnificent pamphlets, splendidly illustrated diatribes. The deep philosophic thought of George Eliot's best novels quietly suffuses and illumines them everywhere. There is no sermon here, no lecture there, no solid mass interposing between this

incident and that, no ponderous moral hung around the neck of this or that personage. The reader feels that he is under the spell of one who is not merely a great story-teller, but who is also a deep thinker.

Mr. Anthony Trollope carries to its utmost limit the realism begun by Thackeray. He has none of Thackeray's genius; none of his fancy or feeling; none of his genuine creative power. He can describe with minute photographic faithfulness the ways, the talk, and sometimes even the emotions of a Belgravian family, of a nobleman's country house, or the 'womenkind' of a dean in a cathedral town. He does not trouble himself with passion or deep pathos, although he has got as far as to describe very touchingly the mental pains of a pretty girl thrown over by her lover, and has suggested with some genuine power the blended emotion, half agony of sorrow, half sense of relief, experienced by an elderly clergyman on the death of a shrewish wife. It was natural that after the public had had a long succession of Mr. Trollope's novels there should come a ready welcome for the school of fiction which was called the sensational. Of this school Mr. Wilkie Collins headed one class and Miss Braddon the other. Miss Braddon dealt in what we may call simple straightforward murders and bigamies, and such-like material; Mr. Wilkie Collins made his crimes always of an enigmatic nature, and compelled the reader to puzzle them out as if they were morbid conundrums. Mr. Trollope, however, continued to have his *clientèle* all the time that the sensational school in its various classes or branches was flourishing and fading. Mr. Trollope's readers may have turned away for a moment to hear what became of the lady who dropped her husband down the well or to guess at the secret of the mysterious Woman in White. But they soon turned loyally back to follow the gentle fortunes of Lily Dale, and to hear what was going on in the household of Framley Parsonage and under the stately roof of the Duke of Omnium.

Mr. Charles Reade, with all his imperfections as an artist, belongs to a higher order than Mr. Trollope, who is so much more thoroughly a master of his own narrower art. 'Peg Woffington' and 'Christie Johnstone,' the former published so long ago as 1852, seem almost perfect in their symmetry and beauty. 'The Cloister and the Hearth' might well-nigh have persuaded a reader that a new Walter Scott was about to arise on the horizon of our literature. In Mr. Reade's more recent works, however, the author began to devote himself to the illustration of some social or legal grievance calling for reform, and people came to understand that a new branch of the art of novel-writing was in process of development, the special gift of which was to convert a Parliamentary blue-book into a work of fiction. The treatment of criminals in prison and in far-off

penal settlements; the manner in which patients are dealt with in private lunatic asylums, became the main subject and backbone of the new style of novel, instead of the misunderstandings of lovers, the trials of honest poverty, or the struggles for ascendency in the fashionable circles of Belgravia. Mr. Reade may claim the merit of standing alone in work of this kind. He can make a blue-book live and yet be a blue-book still. He takes the hard and naked facts as he finds them in some newspaper or in the report of some Parliamentary commission, and he so fuses them into the other material whereof his romance is to be made up that it would require a chemical analysis to separate the fiction from the reality. The reader is not conscious that he is going through the boiled-down contents of a blue-book. He has no aggrieved sense of being entrapped into the dry details of some harassing social question. The reality reads like romance; the romance lives like reality. No author ever indulged in a fairer piece of self-glorification than that contained in the last sentence of 'Put yourself in his Place.' 'I have taken,' says Mr. Reade, 'a few undeniable truths out of many, and have laboured to make my readers realise those appalling facts of the day which most men know, but not one in a thousand comprehends, and not one in a hundred thousand realises, until fiction—which, whatever you may have been told to the contrary, is the highest, widest, noblest, and greatest of all the arts—comes to his aid, studies, penetrates, digests the hard facts of chronicles and blue-books, and makes the dry bones live.'

Distinct, peculiar, and lonely is the place in fiction held by Mr. George Meredith, the author of 'The Ordeal of Richard Feverel,' 'Beauchamp's Career,' 'The Egoist,' and other novels. Mr. Meredith has been more than once described as a prose Browning. He has indeed much of Mr. Browning's obscurity of style, not caused by any obscurity of thought, but rather by a certain perverse indifference on the part of the artist to the business of making his meaning as clear to others as it is to himself. He has a good deal of Mr. Browning's peculiar kind of grim saturnine humour, not the humour that bubbles and sparkles—the humour that makes men laugh even while it sometimes draws tears to the eyes. He lacks the novelist's first charm, the power of telling a story well. But, despite these defects, he is unquestionably one of the most remarkable of all the modern novelists, short of the very greatest. There are times when the reader is inclined to wonder how with so many great gifts he has failed to become a great novelist. The story called 'Beauchamp's Career,' which probably not one in every thousand novel-readers has even opened, seems to us to have only narrowly missed being one of the great romances of the age of Queen Victoria. It is full of beauty, of power, and of pathos.

Some of its characters are so drawn that they not merely stand out as it in life before us, but they enable us to enter into all their thoughts and anticipate all their purposes. We can conjecture beforehand what they will do in a given condition of things, just as we can tell how some friend of our own is likely to act when we hear what the circumstances are under which he is called upon to take a decision. This story too is not overladen, as others of Mr. Meredith's unluckily are, by epigram and antithesis, by curiosities of phrase which it is difficult to follow, and conceits which rather dazzle the eyes of the reader than light up the page. If Mr. Meredith's novels were to be examined according to their intellectual worth, they would deserve and demand a much fuller analysis than has been attempted here. But in these pages we are looking at the literature of the time from the chronicler's rather than the critic's point of view. We tell that a certain soldier won a battle or statesman gained a political victory, although we may ourselves be of opinion that the victory was better deserved on the other side. In the same spirit we record the fact that Mr. Meredith has not yet succeeded in gaining that place in fiction which our own judgment of his capacity would say that he is surely well qualified to attain.

Mr. Blackmore's 'Lorna Doone' seems to us on the whole the best novel of the second class produced in England in our time. That is to say, we rank it distinctly below the great novels of Dickens and Thackeray and Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot, but above any novel produced by any writer short of these, and above the inferior works of these great artists themselves. Mr. William Black is the head of a school of fiction which he himself called into existence. Scottish scenery and Scottish character, alternating with certain phases of London life, are the field in which he works, and in which he has no rival. He has not as yet shown himself great in passion or in pathos. The deeper emotions of the human heart, the sterner phases of human life, he has apparently not often cared to touch. But in his own province, somewhat narrow though that be, his art approaches to perfection. He can paint not merely scenery, but even atmosphere, with a delicacy and strength of touch which in themselves constitute an art. Mr. Hardy has done something the same for certain English counties that Mr. Black has done for Scotland. He is occasionally stronger than Mr. Black, but he has not his subtle sweetness, charm, and tender grace, and he is far less equal, far less surely master of his own craft. A word must be said of the delicate porcelain of Miss Thackeray's work in fiction—her tender, gentle, womanly stories, nor should we fail to record the fact that Mrs. Craik's 'John Halifax, Gentleman,' was one of the literary successes of the day.

A style of novel peculiar to this age, and very unlike that of Miss Thackeray or Mrs. Craik, deserves a word of mention. That is the novel which records the lives, the rompings, the ambitions, the flirtations, and the sufferings of what we may call the Roaring Girl of the Victorian age. With tousled unkempt hair, disorderly dress, occasionally dirty hands, and lips bubbling over with perpetual slang, this strange young woman has bounced into fiction. She has always a true and tender heart under her somewhat uncouth appearance and manners. When she falls in love, she falls in love very intensely, and although she may have had all manner of flirtations, she generally clings to the one true passion, and is not uncommonly found dying of a broken heart at the end of the novel. Perhaps the one merit about this kind of fiction, when it is really honest and at its best, is that it recognises the fact that women are not a distinct angelic order of beings, but that they have their strong passions and even their coarse desires like men. Such advantage as there may be in setting this fact plainly before the world, on the authority of writers who are women themselves, the school may claim to have. It is not a high, or refined, or noble, or in any way commendable school of fiction, but at its best it is sincere. At its worst—and it very soon reached its worst—it may be described as insufferable.

The fiction of this later period is, like the poetry, inferior to that of the period which we had to consider in our former survey. It has more names, but not such great names. It would almost seem as if the present school of fiction is, to borrow a phrase from French politics, exhausting its mandate. The sensation novel has had its day, and its day was but an episode, an interruption. Realism has now well-nigh done all it can. Its close details, its trivial round of common cares and ambitions, its petty trials and easy loves, seem now at last to have spent their attractive power, and to urge with their fading breath the need of some new departure for the novelist. Perhaps the one common want in the more modern novel may suggest the new source of supply. Perhaps, in order to give a fresh life to our fiction, it will have to be dipped once again in the old holy well of romance.

APPENDIX.

The first of the many difficulties which the Gladstone Administration of 1880–85 had to encounter was the Bradlaugh difficulty. Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, elected for Northampton, desired to make affirmation instead of taking the oath in the usual manner. This he claimed the right to do under the Parliamentary Oaths Act. This was the beginning of a long wrangle, lasting over many years, involving re-election, much litigation, and attempted legislation, creating one unhappy scene, and for long enough allotting to Mr. Bradlaugh the curious position of being at once a member and not a member of the House of Commons. It was not until the General Election of 1885 that Mr. Bradlaugh, re-elected for Northampton, quietly took the oath, and for the first time enjoyed the full privileges of membership uncontested.

Out of the Bradlaugh episode arose the Fourth Party, called into being by a politician who up to that time had played no part of any importance in politics, but who from that time was destined to be one of the most conspicuous figures in English politics—Lord Randolph Churchill. The Fourth Party, led by Lord Randolph Churchill, and composed of Mr. A. J. Balfour, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, and Mr. (now Sir) John Gorst, came into existence primarily to oppose Mr. Bradlaugh's admission to Parliament, but it soon became a decided power in politics, working for many aims. The House was at first inclined to smile at the Fourth Party; it was soon to learn that the Fourth Party was no smiling matter. The history of the six years from the accession of the Gladstone Administration to the Jubilee year is in a very large degree the history of Lord Randolph Churchill. His readiness, his irreverence, his alert pugnacity, were the terror of the leaders of his own camp, but his really remarkable ability soon made him essential to the party of which he became in due season, and for a season, the actual if not the nominal leader. It is curious to note that his rise followed so closely upon the disappearance from the political scene of his great chief and example, Lord Beaconsfield, who died in April 1881.

The Irish question has been the predominant question of the last six years, casting all other questions of home and foreign policy entirely into the shade. Mr. Parnell had come back to Westminster as the leader of the Irish parliamentary party with a largely increased following, and under his leadership the great majority of the Irish party sat in opposition to the Government, thereby intimating that they considered themselves of necessity opposed to any Government which was not prepared to make some serious concession to the pressing needs of Ireland. At first it appeared as if the Government and the Irish party might work harmoniously together. The Liberal party had received the full strength of the Irish vote during the election. The Government announced that they were going to abandon Coercion. But the distress in Ireland was great. New legislation on the Land question was urgently called for, and the Queen's speech contained no reference to the land. Moreover, evictions were increasing terribly. The Irish members brought in a bill to stay evictions. The Government refused to accept the Irish measure, but brought in a Compensation for Disturbance Bill, which was rejected by the House of Lords. From this point the strife between the Irish party and the Government widened daily. Mr. Forster, although a capable statesman and well-meaning man, was not suited for the post of Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant. There was soon open war between him and the National party in Ireland. State prosecutions, all-night sittings, Coercion Acts, expulsion of Irish members, imprisonment of Irish members, strife in Parliament, and disturbance in Ireland, made the years from 1880 to 1885 a kind of political nightmare. The Government were compelled, however, to recognise the fact that the agrarian condition of Ireland was in urgent need of reform, and in 1881 Mr. Gladstone brought forward a Land Bill, which, after long debate, was sent to the Lords in a much improved condition. For a short while there was a struggle between the two Houses; the Tory majority in the Upper House anxious to destroy the bill, the Liberal majority in the Lower House determined to maintain it. In the end the Lords gave way and the bill became law. The National party in Ireland received the bill with tempered enthusiasm; the Land League prepared various test cases; the Government seemed to be convinced that Mr. Parnell was determined to arrest the progress of the measure, and the *coup d'état* of 1881 was the result. A descent was made upon the leaders of the National party; Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon, and many other members were arrested, the Land League was proclaimed, 'United Ireland' was suppressed, and for the time the policy of Mr. Forster reigned supreme.

That policy was reversed in 1882, when Mr. Forster resigned—not to take office again, for he died in 1885. The political prisoners were

released, and a new era of peace appeared to be opening for Ireland. The bright prospect was immediately and appallingly darkened by the tragedy of May 6, 1882, when the newly-appointed Chief Secretary, Lord Frederick Cavendish, and Mr. Burke were assassinated in the Phœnix Park. The immediate result was fresh coercion and a further parliamentary struggle before the stringent measures proposed by the Government became law. Under the rule of Lord Spencer and Mr. (now Sir George) Trevelyan Ireland grew no quieter, and the Irish difficulty seemed no nearer to solution. The debates on the so-called Kilmainham Treaty, the Errington Mission to Rome, the Dublin Castle Scandal—each in its turn agitated Parliament. After a time Mr. Trevelyan resigned, and his place was taken by Mr. Campbell Bannerman. An Arrears Bill, drafted by Mr. Parnell while in prison, was the precursor of a Government measure, which passed into law in 1882.

The foreign history of the Gladstone Administration was stormy and warlike. It inherited, and concluded, the disastrous Afghan War of its predecessor; it had a war with the Boers, in which the Boers fought well, and gained what they fought for; it had its extraordinary war with Egypt, in order to uphold the Khedive against the National party headed by Arabi Pasha; it had its evil-omened Soudan struggle, which gave Gordon and Khartoum to the Mahdi, and left so many brave and famous Englishmen and Irishmen the victims of the Arab spears. It had, of course, some inevitable misunderstandings with Russia.

In domestic legislature the great event was the triumph, in the face of many difficulties, of the Reform and Redistribution Bills. The Government had scarcely completed this great task before it met its fate. On June 8, 1885, the Gladstone Administration was defeated on Mr. Childers's Budget, and Lord Salisbury came into power. Not for long, however. Even with the aid of Lord Randolph Churchill, who was now a Cabinet Minister, the new Tory Ministry could not long hold out against the odds arrayed against it. It was in its turn defeated on a now historical amendment of Mr. Jesse Collins's; there was a general election in the autumn of 1885, the result of which was to place Mr. Gladstone again in office.

By this time Mr. Gladstone's views on the Irish question had largely developed. He had never been opposed to the principle of Home Rule; he was now converted to entire sympathy with it. The recent election—which had sent Mr. Parnell back to Parliament with a following of eighty-six, many of whom represented Ulster constituencies—was in itself sufficient proof that the majority of the Irish people ardently desired Home Rule. It was soon known that Mr. Gladstone was engaged upon

a Home Rule scheme, and the appointment of Mr. John Morley as Chief Secretary showed at once the sympathetic attitude of the new Government towards Ireland. Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule scheme was not, however, entirely satisfactory to all his following. Lord Hartington, Mr. Chamberlain, Sir George Trevelyan, and others broke away from him. When the Home Rule Bill was finally introduced on April 8, 1886, while it met with the warm approval of the Irish representatives and of the bulk of the Liberal party, it caused a revolt among some of Mr. Gladstone's followers, who, under the leadership of Lord Hartington, and with the title of Liberal Unionists, gave battle to the measure. The Home Rule Bill was defeated. Mr. Gladstone appealed to the country. A fierce fight was waged in the constituencies, and the result gave to the alliance of Tories and Liberal Unionists a majority over the Gladstonian Liberals and the English and Irish Home Rulers. The history of the new Salisbury Administration is too recent and too uncertain to be further touched on here. It belongs to the future.

In these few pages the attempt has been made to give the very swiftest and most comprehensive summary of the events of the last six years. No thought of consecutive exhaustive narrative has been entertained; all that has been desired, and all that has been essayed, is to give in rapid record the mere headings of the great events which make the six years from 1880 to 1886 among the most momentous of a momentous reign.

J. H. McC.

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